

**FACTORS INFLUENCING POOR EXAMINATION PERFORMANCE IN  
COMMERCIAL SUBJECTS IN TANZANIA ORDINARY LEVEL  
SECONDARY SCHOOLS: A CASE OF ILALA MUNICIPALITY**

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**A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE  
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**CERTIFICATION**

I the undersigned certify that I have read and hereby recommends for acceptance by The Open University of Tanzania the dissertation titled: “Factors Influencing Poor Examination Performance in Commercial Subjects in Tanzania Ordinary Level Secondary Schools: A Case Study of Ilala Municipality”, in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Masters of Education in Administration, Planning and Policy Studies.

.....  
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Date

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## **DECLARATION**

I, Juliana Masasi Mhonyiwa, do hereby declare that, this dissertation is my original work and has never been presented to any university or institution for any academic award.

.....

Signature

.....

Date

## **DEDICATION**

I dedicate wholeheartedly this study to my late parents, my Father Samuel Masasi Nyambwe and my Mother Dorica Manyaki Pigahodi for forgoing so much in me that my siblings and I could live happily and prosperously through good education. Mama you kept insisting to me, since childhood that my destiny was in the “PEN” and now I really realized the worth of the PEN through your advice. May Almighty God rest my dear parents’ souls in peace and I will always salute you. Also I dedicate this study to my children Dorica Junior, Cletus and Hezekiah whom I pray that they follow my path and reach even greater heights than I have done.

## **ABSTRACT**

This study explored the factors that influenced poor examination performance in commercial subjects in secondary schools in Ilala Municipality, Dar-es-Salaam, Tanzania. It examined teacher's qualities in teaching commercial subjects, availability of teaching and learning resources in relation to commercial subjects, students' interest in commercial subjects and the extent to which commercial subjects are inspected, and how these affect performance in ordinary level examinations. The study used qualitative approach, using interviews, focus group discussion, observation and documentary data. Thematic approach was used in data analysis. The major findings were related mostly to teachers' qualities, as some of the teachers were not conversant with English language, as well as subject matter. One of the teachers was a diploma failure, and another did not study commercial subjects at A- Level. English language was also an obstacle for students and some of the teachers, as they could not communicate well with their students in class. Hence, they used mostly Kiswahili instead of English as the medium of instruction. Apart from these factors, also teaching and learning resources were a problem; commercial subject textbooks were not readily available for students use. On top of these, old syllabus was used; there was no recent knowledge on the subject. Teachers lacked seminars and in-service training. These added to lack of intrinsic motivation among government teachers. The study recommended several remedies for that situation. Also the study recommended further research on the topic based on a large sample by using a survey research approach in order to generalize the obtained data to a large sample.

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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>CERTIFICATION .....</b>	<b>ii</b>
<b>COPYRIGHT .....</b>	<b>iii</b>
<b>DECLARATION.....</b>	<b>iv</b>
<b>DEDICATION.....</b>	<b>v</b>
<b>ABSTRACT .....</b>	<b>vi</b>
<b>ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.....</b>	<b>vii</b>
<b>LIST OF TABLES .....</b>	<b>xiii</b>
<b>LIST OF FIGURES .....</b>	<b>xiv</b>
<b>LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS .....</b>	<b>xv</b>
<b>CHAPTER ONE .....</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>1.0 INTRODUCTION.....</b>	<b>1</b>
1.1 Introduction.....	1
1.2 Background to the Problem .....	1
1.3 Statement of the Problem.....	4
1.4 Research Objectives.....	8
1.5 Research Tasks and Questions.....	9
1.7 Organization of the Dissertation.....	11
1.8 The Theoretical Framework for Examination Performance .....	12
<b>CHAPTER TWO .....</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>2.0 LITERATURE REVIEW .....</b>	<b>14</b>
2..1 Introduction.....	14
2.1.1 Academic Performance.....	14
2.1.2. Commercial Subjects .....	14

2.1.3. Importance of Commercial Subjects in Society's Development .....	15
2.2 Teachers' Qualities in Teaching Subjects.....	15
2.2.1 Who is a Teacher ? .....	15
2.2 Teaching and Learning Resources.....	22
2.3 Students' Interest in Learning Subjects and How this Affects their Performance .....	24
2.4 School Inspection Studies with Direct Bearing on Commercial Subjects in Tanzania.....	28
2.6 Conclusion .....	31
<b>CHAPTER THREE .....</b>	<b>33</b>
<b>3.0 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY .....</b>	<b>33</b>
3.1 Introduction.....	33
3.1.1 Research Approach.....	33
3.1.2 Limitations of Qualitative Approach .....	34
3.2 Study Area .....	34
3.3 Population Sample .....	35
3.4 Sample .....	36
3.5 The Sampling Procedures .....	37
3.6 Methods of Data Collection.....	37
3.6.1 Interviews .....	37
3.6.2 Focus Group Discussion (FGD).....	38
3.6.3 Observation.....	39
3.6.4 Documentary Analysis.....	40
3.7 Limitation of the Study .....	41

3.8	Data Analysis Plan.....	41
3.8.1	Qualitative Data Analysis .....	41
3.8.2	Documentary Data Analysis .....	43
3.8.3	Conclusion .....	44
3.9	Validity and Reliability of Data.....	44
3.10	Ethical Issues Consideration.....	45
	<b>CHAPTER FOUR.....</b>	<b>46</b>
4.0	<b>DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS.....</b>	<b>46</b>
4.1	Introduction.....	46
4.2	Teachers' Qualities in Teaching Commercial Subjects.....	47
4.2	The Availability of Teaching and Learning Resources in Commercial Secondary Schools.....	67
4.4	Student Interest in Studying Commercial Subjects .....	77
4.5	School Inspection.....	82
	<b>CHAPTER FIVE.....</b>	<b>88</b>
5.0	<b>SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS .....</b>	<b>88</b>
5.1	Introduction.....	88
5.2	Summary of the Study .....	88
5.2.1	Major Findings .....	90
5.3	Conclusion .....	95
5.4	Recommendations.....	96
5.4.1	Areas of Further Research .....	97
	<b>REFERENCES.....</b>	<b>99</b>

<b>APPENDICES .....</b>	<b>109</b>
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## LIST OF TABLES

Table 1.1: Students' Performance in Commercial Subjects in Ordinary Level Secondary School National form Four Examinations Since 2004-2011 .....	5
Table 1.2: Students' Performance in Form Four National Examinations at Azania Secondary School, 2004-2011 .....	6
Table 1.3: Students' Performance in form Four National Examinations at Dar es Salaam Secondary School, 2004-2011 .....	7
Table 1.4: Students' Performance in form Four National Examinations at Kisutu Girls Secondary, 2004-2011 .....	7
Table 3.1: Secondary Schools Selected in Ilala Municipality .....	35
Table 4.1: Distribution of Commercial Subject Teachers and their Academic and Professional Qualifications.....	48

**FIGURE**

Figure 1.1: Input-Output Model.....	13
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### **LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS**

A Level	Advanced Level
ACE	Advanced Certificate in Education
CAG	Controller and Auditor General
ETP	Education and Training Policy
HGK	History, Geography and Kiswahili
MOEVT	Ministry of Education and Vocational Training
NAEP	National Assessment of Educational Progress
NECTA	National Examinations Council of Tanzania
O Level	Ordinary level
OFSTED	Office for Standards in Education
PIRLS	The Progress in International Reading literacy Study
PMO-RALG	Prime Minister's Office, Regional Administration and Local Government
SACMEQ	Southern and Eastern Africa Consortium for Monitoring Educational Quality,
SAFEA	State Administration of Foreign Experts Affairs
SASS	Study Analyses of Schools and Staffing Surveys
TIE:	Tanzania Institute of Education
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNISA	University of South Africa
URT	United Republic of Tanzania

## **CHAPTER ONE**

### **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

#### **1.1 Introduction**

This chapter provides an overview of the research background, the statement of the problem, purpose, general and specific objectives of the research as well as research tasks and questions. It lastly gives the significance of the study, organization of the dissertation and the theoretical framework.

#### **1.2 Background to the Problem**

In the 1970s a program of vocationalizing ordinary level secondary school curriculum was introduced in Tanzania. This was in line with the implementation of Education for Self-reliance Policy of 1967 under the Arusha Declaration. The aim of the policy was to prepare individuals who would be self-reliant and ready to take up self-employment once they left this level of education (Nyerere, 1967). Following the Arusha Declaration, it was obligatory according to the Ministry of Education Circular No. 2 of 1972 that secondary schools should offer commercial subjects (Commerce and Book-keeping or Accounts) -which were among the practical subjects (referred to as bias subjects).

In 1974 the Ministry of Education introduced another circular known as National Education Circular No. 3 of 1974 which elaborated further on the practical (bias) subjects. This circular directed every school to prepare students in one of the four designated bias subjects; Commerce, Agriculture, Home Economics and Technical



biases. It was recommended that one third of class time should be used for the bias subjects.

Further elaboration of the implementation of the biases was made through Education Circular No. 4 of 1979 in Pendaeli (1983) which directed that all students in form one and two should study all basic subjects irrespective of the biases they were in. Basic subjects included Political Education, Kiswahili, English, Mathematics, Biology, Geography, History, Physics, Chemistry and Religion. However, as they were promoted to form three, they had to study one bias subject and basic subjects.

Self-reliance Policy of 1967 in Nyerere (1967), Ministry of Education Circular No. 2 of 1973 and circular No. 3 of 1974 in Pendaeli (1983) aimed at preparing students through practical bias who would be self- reliant after school as we have seen above. Though there were four biases: Commercial, Agricultural, Home Economics and Technical subjects, this study dwelt only on Commercial bias.

Apart from the above policy and circulars, in 1995 another policy namely Education and Training Policy –ETP-(URT(a),1995) was introduced. This was to keep education in perspective with the socio-cultural, economic and technological demands of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. In this light commercial subjects were among important subjects in the development of the country's economy. Therefore the Commercial subjects' objectives were:

- (i) To describe the basic principles of commerce which are necessary in modern business environment;

- (ii) To apply modern commercial methods for example import and export formalities and procedures and distribution methods;
- (iii) To differentiate marketing and procurement techniques that is pricing, discounting, promotion and ordering
- (iv) To discuss and analyse contracts which are cornerstone of exchange and distribution;
- (v) To distinguish the various Book-keeping systems concerning financial matters and records;
- (vi) To use the terminology of accounts with clarity for the purpose of effective communication in and control of business;
- (vii) To audit books of accounts;
- (viii) To explain reasons and importance of keeping books of accounts for the individuals, companies and state as a whole; and
- (ix) To prepare the learner for future specialization. (URT( b),1997)

The efforts made by the Ministry of Education and Culture by then to implement secondary education curriculum, met some challenges including that of having a curriculum with too many subjects for ordinary level secondary education assessment. In addition, the Ministry had an opinion that, bias subjects were facing a number of challenges particularly shortage of resources for example, teaching and learning materials and teachers. Therefore, commercial subjects were excluded in the nine basic subjects which included Civics, History, Geography, Basic Mathematics, Chemistry, Physics, Biology, Kiswahili, and English which were used for assessing students' performance in Form Two national examinations. This was to conform

with the Ministry of Education and Culture's Directive of 2003. The move was clearly explained in the Minister for Education's budget speech of 2004/05 (URT(c), 2004). In that speech the Minister addressed several measures for improving quality of education which included improving secondary school curriculum by removing biases; commercial subjects being one of them. Others excluded were technical and agricultural subjects. That was effected in by the Ministry of Education and Culture Circular No. 9 of 2004 which directed commercial subjects to be deleted from a list of subjects taught in ordinary level secondary schools. However, this directive contradicted with Education for Self-reliance Policy of 1967, Education and Training Policy of 1995 as well as commercial subject's objectives which aimed at preparing a self-reliant person.

The decision of deleting commercial subjects in ordinary level secondary schools was unpopular among stakeholders. Hence it was short-lived. In April, 2006 through the Ministry's Educational Circular No. 1 of 2006 and the Minister for Education Budget Speech of 2006/2007 (URT(d) 2006), commercial subjects were re-introduced by using 1997 syllabus. Though commercial subjects were re-introduced in secondary schools, the National Form Four Examinations performance since 2009 to 2011 was not encouraging. The reason for this poor performance is not yet known, hence the need for investigation.

### **1.3 Statement of the Problem**

The expectations of Education and Training Policy (ETP) of 1995 were to keep education perspective with the socio-cultural, economic and technological demands

of the 21<sup>st</sup> century; this was a good outlook. Commercial subjects are among the subjects which can play that role. Unfortunately, examination performance in those subjects in ordinary level secondary schools is discouraging. This can be proved by Form Four national examination results as shown in Table 1.4.

**Table 1.1: Students' Performance in Commercial Subjects in Ordinary Level Secondary School National form Four Examinations Since 2004-2011**

Year	Subject	Total no. of candidates sat for examination	No. of school candidates passed	Total number of candidate who failed	% Failure
2004	Commerce	11,648	8,107	3541	35.90
	Bookkeeping	11568	6373	5195	44.92
2005	Commerce	13,387	8917	4470	33.39
	Bookkeeping	11757	7091	4666	39.69
2006	Commerce	10,557	7,297	3260	30.88
	Bookkeeping	9,316	5663	3653	39.21
2007	Commerce	10,288	6,256	4,032	39.19
	Bookkeeping	9149	5388	3,761	41.11
2009	Commerce	18,008	7,095	10,913	59.27
	Bookkeeping	17,017	7,802	9,215	52.71
2010	Commerce	24,239	7,715	16,524	67.88
	Bookkeeping	23,001	11,421	11,580	49.90
2011	Commerce	24,915	4,816	20,099	80.44
	Bookkeeping	23,854	3,983	19,871	83.11

Source: National Examination Council of Tanzania (NECTA), Examination Results, Statistics, 2004-2011

It can be seen from Table 1.1 that, most commercial subjects' students in ordinary level national examinations performed poorly. The situation was worse in year 2011 whereby 80.44 percent of commercial students failed and 83.11 percent of book keeping students also failed. The failures in percentages were generally higher for both subjects between 2009 and 2011. A disturbing trend is noted between 2009 and 2011 in the failure percentages which ranged from about 50 to 83 percents for bookkeeping and 59 to 80 percents for commerce. It is further noted that, in 2010

and 2011, the number of students who sat for the national examinations failed dramatically to over 20,000 students for each subject. This tremendous failure may have been attributed, in part, by the Ministry's Education Circular No. 9 of 2004 which deleted commercial subjects in Ordinary Level secondary schools. In contrast, there was a sharp increase in the number of candidates who sat for the national examinations from around 18,000 in 2009 to 24,000 in 2011.

Nevertheless, the performance of commercial subjects' students in the national picture is not encouraging even after the re-introduction of commercial subjects in ordinary level secondary schools. The reason for this continuous tremendous failure in commercial subjects is not yet known. Tables 1.2-4, present students' performance in Form Four national examinations for three secondary schools: Azania, Dar es Salaam and Kisutu, purposely selected in Ilala Municipality.

**Table 1.2: Students' Performance in Form Four National Examinations at Azania Secondary School, 2004-2011**

Year	Subject	Total no. of candidates sat for examination	No. of school candidates passed	Total number of candidate who failed	% Failure
2004	Commerce	139	115	24	17
	Bookkeeping	121	93	28	23
2005	Commerce	109	89	20	18
	Bookkeeping	96	73	23	24
2006	Commerce	78	58	20	26
	Bookkeeping	74	62	12	16
2007	Commerce	75	56	19	25
	Bookkeeping	72	54	18	25
2009	Commerce	123	95	28	23
	Bookkeeping	123	96	27	22
2010	Commerce	93	59	34	37
	Bookkeeping	93	75	18	20
2011	Commerce	56	35	21	38
	Bookkeeping	56	26	30	54

Source: Azania Boys Secondary school National Examination Results, Year, 2004-2011

**Table 1.3: Students' Performance in form Four National Examinations at Dar es Salaam Secondary School, 2004-2011**

Year	Subject	Total no. of candidates sat for examination	No. of school candidates passed	Total number of candidate who failed	% Failure
2004	Commerce	43	41	02	5
	Bookkeeping	43	38	05	12
2005	Commerce	28	26	02	7
	Bookkeeping	28	22	06	21
2006	Commerce	29	28	01	3
	Bookkeeping	29	28	01	3
2007	Commerce	32	30	02	6
	Bookkeeping	32	29	03	9
2009	Commerce	36	31	05	14
	Bookkeeping	36	35	01	3
2010	Commerce	40	34	06	15
	Bookkeeping	40	26	14	35
2011	Commerce	47	27	20	43
	Bookkeeping	47	27	20	43

Source: Dar-es-salaam Secondary School Examination Results, Year 2004-2011

**Table 1.4: Students' Performance in form Four National Examinations at Kisutu Girls Secondary, 2004-2011**

Year	Subject	Total no. of candidates sat for examination	No. of school candidates passed	Total number of candidate who failed	% Failure
2004	Commerce	98	58	40	41
	Bookkeeping	98	54	44	45
2005	Commerce	56	42	14	25
	Bookkeeping	56	42	14	25
2006	Commerce	66	51	15	23
	Bookkeeping	66	56	10	15
2007	Commerce	37	26	11	30
	Bookkeeping	37	26	11	30
2009	Commerce	81	51	30	37
	Bookkeeping	81	58	23	28
2010	Commerce	80	33	47	59
	Bookkeeping	80	61	19	24
2011	Commerce	77	42	35	45
	Bookkeeping	77	38	39	51

**Source:** Kisutu Girls Secondary School National Examination Results, Year 2004-2011

The results as presented in the Tables 2- 4 above indicate three features: Generally, failure rates continued in the post curricula reform period (2009 - 2011) with no

particular trend emerging. However, Dar es Salaam, Azania and Kisutu secondary schools had high failure percentages during years (2010 - 2011) than the previous years. Like in the national statistics reflected in Table 1.1, the examination failures percentages for years 2010 and 2011 tended to be relatively higher than in the previous years covering the post curriculum reform.

The results reflect that even individual schools are not doing well in the ordinary level commercial subjects' examinations. Since the secondary school curriculum was reformed in 2006-2011, there is no research done on the factors influencing poor examination performance in commercial subjects in Ilala Municipal ordinary level secondary schools, in order to identify the factors affecting that poor performance in those subjects with a view of suggesting ways for improving the situation.

#### **1.4 Research Objectives**

The general objective of this study was to investigate the factors that influence students' poor examination performance in commercial subjects in Tanzanian Ordinary Level Secondary Schools, a case study of Ilala Municipality. It seeks to explain from the data collected, the factors that lead to students' poor performance in examination at that level and making recommendations for improving performance.

In the light of this wide aim, the specific objectives of this research are therefore:

- i) To examine teachers' qualities in teaching commercial subjects;
- ii) To assess the availability of teaching and learning resources in relation to commercial subjects;

- iii) To examine students' interest in learning commercial subjects and how this affects their performance;
- iv) To find out the extent to which commercial subjects are inspected and how recommendations given by school inspectors are adhered to.

### **1.5 Research Tasks and Questions**

The following research tasks and accompanying research questions guided the study.

#### **Task 1: To examine teachers' qualities in teaching commercial subjects.**

##### **Questions:**

- i) What academic and professional qualifications of commercial subject teachers?
- ii) How long have commercial subject teachers been teaching commercial subjects?
- iii) Are teachers conversant with the use of medium of instruction (English) in teaching commercial subjects?

#### **Task 2: To assess the availability of teaching and learning resources in relation to commercial subjects.**

##### **Question:**

- i) What are the available resources for teaching and learning commercial subjects at the school?

#### **Task 3: To examine students' interest in commercial subjects and how this affects their performance:**

##### **Questions:**

- i) Are students interested in commercial subjects?



- (i) Are students eager to find out commercial subjects materials which are not available at their schools?
- (ii) Are commercial subjects teachers conversant with the medium of instructions (English) in teaching commercial subjects?

**Task 4: To find out the extent to which commercial subjects are inspected and how recommendations given by school inspectors are adhered to.**

**Questions:**

- (i) Are commercial subjects inspected? If yes, what was the last inspection in selected schools in Ilala Municipal?
- (ii) Were school inspectors' report recommendations effected by school management?

### **1.6 Significance of the Study**

One of the objectives of establishing commercial subjects in Tanzania education curriculum was to implement education for self-reliance among students, especially after completion of their studies. This objective has not been realized as most students performed poorly in national Form Four examinations especially after the curriculum reforms. Most Commercial subjects' students are not acquiring business skills as anticipated to enable them to employ themselves in various commercial activities.

Therefore it is expected that findings from this study will familiarize the stakeholders in the Ministry of Education and Vocational Training as well as policy makers and

planners on the challenges facing commercial subjects in order to take necessary measures for commercial students' performance improvement in ordinary level secondary school examinations.

On the other hand, the research findings contribute to the existing literature on poor examination performance in commercial subjects in ordinary level secondary schools in Tanzania. Also, the study will act as a catalyst for further studies since no studies have been conducted since 2006 to date.

In addition, the Ministry is advised to observe consequences she creates among teachers and students resulting from changing education circulars from time to time, hence to improve students' performance in commercial subjects and others in general.

## **1.7 Organization of the Dissertation**

The dissertation is divided into five chapters. Chapter one has given the background of the study, statement of the problem, research purpose, research objectives, significance of the study and a theoretical framework. Chapter two presents a review of relevant literature, synthesis of literature and the knowledge gap. Chapter three consists of research methodology; arguments for adopting largely qualitative approach, data collection methods and data analysis procedures. Chapter four presents data presentation, analysis and discussion; whereas chapter five (the final chapter) deals with summary of the study, conclusion and recommendations. It also presents areas of further research.

### **1.8 The Theoretical Framework for Examination Performance**

In this study, the researcher has adapted the system theory input output model advanced by Ludwig Bertalanfly in the mid 1950s. The theory according to Koonzt and Weirich (1988), postulates that an organized enterprise does not exist in vacuum but is dependent on its external environment. Therefore the enterprise receives inputs, transforms them to outputs and exports the outputs to the environment.

The model in relation to my study is like a vicious circle. The school does not exist in a vacuum. It depends on the external environment like a company. The school receives students from the community. When they enter school the process of teaching and learning starts. Teaching process needs teachers with good teaching qualities, teaching and learning resources, students' interests in the subjects and school inspectors to monitor the whole process of teaching and learning. The aim is to get good output after the whole process that means to have good examination results/performance. Hence, if they succeed well at ordinary level national examination that means they will be expected after schooling in colleges and institutions they will go back to the community as teachers, economists, bankers, accountants, and others might be self-employed.

In this study, the input focused on form four students studying commercial subjects whereas the process was characterized by commercial subjects' teachers qualities, availability of teaching and learning resources including: school library, computer laboratory, textbooks and syllabus. Additional focus was in students' interest in learning commercial subjects, teaching strategies and school inspection. The

outcome was academic achievement as characterized by students' academic performance in national Form Four examinations. Academic performance, according to Cambridge University reporter (2003) is defined in terms of examination performance. In this study these two words were used interchangeably to mean the same.

<b>Input from external environment</b>		<b>Process in schools needs</b>		<b>Output expected</b>
students,	→	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Teachers qualities,</li> <li>- teaching and learning resources:</li> <li>- student interests in the subjects</li> <li>- school inspection</li> </ul>	→	good examination performance in commercial subjects

**Figure 1.1: Input-Output Model**

Source: Input output model adapted from Koonzt and Weirich (1988)

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **2.0 LITERATURE REVIEW**

#### **2.1 Introduction**

The literature cited below was looking into the problems which influence students' poor academic performance in general and a review of studies with a direct bearing on commercial subjects in Tanzania ordinary level secondary schools.

##### **2.1.1 Academic Performance**

Adediwura and Tayo (2007) define academic performance as the display of knowledge attained or skills developed in school subjects designated by test and examination scores or marks assigned by the subjects' teachers. It could also be said to be any expression used to represent students' scholastic standing. Academic performance is described at the state level as an evaluation of students' performance on standardized tests geared toward specific ages and based on a set of achievements students in each age group are expected to meet (Bell, 2014). On the other hand, Aremu (2003) defines poor academic performance as a performance that is adjudged by the examinee as falling below an expected standard. In this study academic performance is based on the national Form Four examination results in commercial subjects.

##### **2.1.2. Commercial Subjects**

Commercial subjects according to the Ministry of Education Circular No 2 of 1972 are taken to mean Commerce and Book-keeping subjects. They are among the

practical subjects referred to as bias subjects. After defining commercial subjects let us now see their importance.

### **2.1.3 Importance of Commercial Subjects in Society's Development**

Commercial subjects play a fundamental role to the economy and have both private and social benefits. Their importance cannot be overemphasized particularly during the period of globalized economy. Commercial subjects prepare school leavers well to cope with the dynamics of the free trade/market of goods and services. In order to meet the objectives of commercial bias subjects there should be teachers who would make sure that the ball is rolling in the right direction of success.

The following section is divided into four subthemes. The first section reviews related literature on the themes of teacher qualities, teaching and learning resources, students interest in learning and school inspection; and related local literature review of studies with direct bearing on commercial subjects in Tanzania.

## **2.2 Teachers' Qualities in Teaching Subjects**

### **2.2.1 Who is a Teacher?**

A teacher under Education Act of 1978 (URT(e), 1978) is defined as a person who has an appropriate certificate issued under this Education Act. He /she may teach or be employed as a teacher. Being a teacher is not enough but a good teacher. A good teacher is determined by the following qualities:

- i) Teacher' academic and professional qualifications;
- ii) Teacher's professional ability to communicate effectively;

- iii) Teacher's motivation in the teaching job;
- iv) Teacher's teaching experience;
- v) Teacher's mastery of subject matter. ( Goe and Stickler (2008)

These qualities will be discussed here below. Let us start with teacher's academic and professional qualifications.

### **2.2.2 Teacher' Academic and Professional Qualifications**

Hammond (2000) study examined the ways in which teacher qualifications and other school inputs were related to student achievement across the states in the United States of America, by using data from a 50-state survey of policies, state case study analyses, the 1993-94 Schools and Staffing Surveys (SASS), and the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP). Among his evidence-based findings for the effects of teacher quality on student outcomes was that, teacher quality characteristics such as certification status and degree in the field to be taught are very significantly and positively correlated with student outcomes. The most consistent highly significant predictor of student achievement in reading and mathematics in each year tested is the proportion of well-qualified teachers in a state.

Also Okonkwo (2000) in his study examined the instruction between two independent variables of teacher quality and instructional strategy on students' performance in secondary school science found that students taught by professional trained biology teachers performed significantly better than those students who were taught by the non-professional biology teachers on the genetic objective achievement

test. After looking at the teacher's academic and professional qualifications in relation to students performance let us dwell on teacher's professional ability to communicate effectively to students.

### **2.2.3 Teacher's Professional Ability to Communicate Effectively**

Effective communication draws a student closer to his/her teacher. This makes a student pay attention during a lesson. Attentiveness of a student in class leads to success. This is in contrary to teachers who communicate negatively, harshly and unfriendly to their students, hence expectations of student success may be minimal. On this issue, several studies have been conducted to provide an insight into the teacher-student communication relationship, in general, and what inspires or motivates a student to learn or to become interested.

According to Nel and Müllers' (2006) paper, on the limited English proficiency of final year student teachers enrolled for the Advanced Certificate in Education (ACE) at the University of South Africa (Unisa) assert that teachers are responsible for an inadequate language input (language to which learners are exposed orally or verbally) due to their own limited English proficiency. Also, a teacher should talk on a learner's level of comprehension, that is, the learner should be able to understand what the teacher is saying (Richards & Lockhart, 1994). Transference from one speaker's use of language to another speaker's use of language can be viewed as a contamination factor in the use of the second language. Where teachers' own second language knowledge is not on an acceptable standard for the use of English as English proficiency, their poor usage and knowledge of the language are transferred



to the learners (Stander, 2001). These assertions are supported by findings of The Progress in International Reading Literacy Study (PIRLS) of 2006.

The study concluded that, factors contributing to poor second language acquisition and academic achievement include poor language teaching by teachers whose own English proficiency is limited of which is conducted every five years with 40 countries participating, including South Africa. The findings, with approximately 30,000 Grade 4 and 5 learners when assessed, were shocking for South Africa's Grade 4 and 5 learners who achieved the lowest mean scores compared to the other participating countries. The study concluded that, factors contributing to poor second language acquisition and academic achievement include poor language teaching by teachers whose own English proficiency is limited (Stander, 2006).

After seeing the relationship between teacher's ability to communicate in class and students' performance, we move to teacher's motivation in teaching job as they relate to students' performance in examination.

#### **2.2.4 Teacher's Motivation in the Teaching Job**

According to Ngu (1998), motivation is described as the enthusiasm and persistence with which a person does a task. Motivation may be defined as the amount of effort a teacher desires to exert in a particular class (Richmond, 1990). In line with this definition, Kreps (1990) classifies motivation as intrinsic motivation, that an individual has for the enjoyment of an activity and extrinsic motivation, that an individual has for an activity due to a reward received for performing the activity.

Teacher's motivation is not only about the motivation to teach but also about the motivation to be a teacher as a lifelong career. Motivation is thought to be responsible for "why people decide to do something, how long they are willing to sustain the activity and how hard they are going to pursue it" (Dörnyei, 2001).

On the other hand, Csikszentmihalyi (1990) has proposed that individuals reach a state of happiness and satisfaction when they are involved in an activity and are functioning at the peak of their abilities. In this situation the individual experiences "high levels of concentration, interest, strength, and control". Students seem to recognize the effectiveness of teachers who are satisfied with their teaching performance. Rothman (1981) suggests that, this association exists because teachers serve as more than just educators; they are role models. Teacher's motivation and interest in the teaching job has a part to play on students' academic achievement.

According to Gorham and Zakahi's (1990) research on the relationship between student achievement and teacher immediacy; there was a positive relationship between these two variables. They defined immediacy as an action(s) that decreases the physical and/or psychological distance between individuals with respect to communication behaviour. These findings are supported by those of Christensen and Menzel (1998), Kelley and Gorham (1988) who investigated the relationship between student achievement and teacher immediacy and found a positive relationship between these two variables. Teachers who were perceived by students to exercise immediacy promoted student learning.

On the other hand, Teven (2001) argues that a vital requisite to effective teaching is establishing a climate of warmth, understanding, and caring within the classroom. Due to the nature of classroom instruction, length of time spent with students, issues of cultural and cognitive diversity, it is essential that teachers develop a caring atmosphere in which to work with their students. Students who feel that teachers care for them tend to achieve academically. Also, a descriptive correlation study by Velez *et al.* (2008) examined the relationships between teacher immediacy and student motivation from a selected class of freshmen enrolled in a college of agriculture course in USA. Results indicated that immediacy does have an association with student motivation. Teacher's motivation in his/her teaching job contributes much to student's good examination performance. If a teacher is not interested in the teaching profession that means he/she is not intrinsically motivated, thus he/she will not be eager to motivate his/her students to learn. Hence it will lead to poor examination performance.

Apart from teachers motivation in enhancing students' good examination performance, also teachers teaching experience plays a great role in student's academic performance.

### **2.2.5 Teacher's Teaching Experience**

West and Chingos (2009) define teaching experience as all years the teacher has spent in the profession. In Hanushek's review (1986) of more than 100 studies of teacher years of experience and student outcomes, only 40 showed a statistically significant relationship. Of these, 33 found that additional years of experience had a

significant positive effect, but seven found that more experience actually had a negative impact on student achievement. According to Goe *et al.* (2008), teaching experience is among the attributes under the category of teacher qualifications that was found to influence student academic performance.

In addition, Goe *et al.* (2008) studied teachers' teaching experience and students' learning outcomes in the secondary schools in Ondo state in Nigeria. The study findings revealed that teachers' teaching experience was significant with students' learning outcomes as measured by their performance in the secondary school certificate examinations. Schools having more teachers with five years and above teaching experience achieved better results than schools having more teachers with less than five years teaching experience.

Conversely, inexperience is shown to have a strong negative effect on student performance. Also, their findings were supported by those of a comprehensive analysis by Greenwald *et al.* (1996) who examined data from 60 studies and found a positive relationship between years of teacher experience and student test scores. Similarly, the Texas Schools Project data showed that students of experienced teachers attained significantly higher levels of achievement than did students of new teachers (those with one to three years of experience).

The study above shows that teachers experience has positive and negative impact to student academic performance. Apart from teacher's experience in the teaching job, teacher's mastery of subject matter can also enhance student' academic achievement

as we shall see below. Let us now look into teacher's mastery of the subject matter in relation to student performance

### **2.2.6 Teacher's Mastery of Subject Matter**

Teacher's mastery of subject matter can be described in three ways according to Eggen and Kauchak (2001): knowledge of content, pedagogical content knowledge and general pedagogical knowledge. This implies that the teacher must have familiarity with the body of knowledge taught; an understanding of a particular topic and how to explain it in a way that it will make sense to the students.

In support of the aforementioned findings, Akinsolu (2010) investigated whether there is a relationship between the quantity and quality of teachers and students academic performance in Osun State, Nigeria public secondary schools. Among the study findings were that teachers' qualifications (that is, teachers with authentic knowledge about the relevant subject) was significantly related to students' academic performance. These qualities make a student acquire interest in a lesson, hence aspires for success. Although much depends on the teacher, there are other issues which contribute to students' success; for instance, teaching and learning resources, students' interest and school inspection. Apart from teacher's qualities in teaching commercial subject also teaching and learning resources play part for students' success in the subject as we shall see below.

## **2.2 Teaching and Learning Resources**

Teaching resources are generic materials used to describe resources teachers use to deliver instruction (Joceylene 2012). They include theoretical and intangible

elements, such as essays or support from other educators, or places to find teaching materials like libraries or resource centers. They are widely accepted to facilitate the teaching and learning process.

The World Bank, *A Chance to Learn* (2001) asserts that “learning and teaching materials are critical ingredients in learning and the intended curriculum cannot be easily implemented without them. Over the past forty years the importance of adequate learning and teaching materials provision (including textbooks, teachers’ guides and supplementary materials) to support educational development and quality upgrading has been recognized by governments throughout the developing world and by most development partners.

It adds that, now there is substantial research evidence which shows that textbooks are one of the most important inputs that have a demonstrable impact on student learning”, and that the two most consistent characteristics in improving student performance include the availability of textbooks and supplementary books. Learning and teaching materials, If we turn to Tanzania secondary schools, are they equipped with learning and teaching materials? (Commercial subjects materials inclusive).

Bregman and Bryner (2003) argue that secondary school effectiveness is largely determined by its quality and relevance which include sufficient supplies of teaching and learning resources, up to date students’ text books and supplementary books. All these supplement the teaching and learning process as indicators of its quality and

relevance. On the other hand, using the materials in teaching process provides the basis for improved teaching and learning of a subject. This is not enough with teaching and learning resources without students' interest in the lesson.

### **2.3 Students' Interest in Learning Subjects and how this Affects their Performance**

Interest is defined as a state of curiosity or concern about or attention to something (Farlex, 2014). This definition, when put in a class situation is described as involving some kind of preference for a school subject or for activities related to that subject.

There is a considerable research base to support a strong correlation between the degrees of student interest among others. For instance, Cziksentmihalyi *et al.* (1993) study on student interest and choice found that students who are engaged in work that interested them were overwhelmingly more able to see connections between their present work in school and their future academic or career goals. These connections form the foundation of commitment to future learning and foster self-directedness. These findings are in agreement with Glasser (1988), who advocates that students who are interested in what they are learning are motivated to pursue learning experiences of ever-increasing complexity and difficulty.

However student learning cannot be detached from how the teacher is facilitating learning since the teacher bridges the student interest and classroom learning. According to Eggen and Kauchak (2001), positive teachers' attitudes are fundamental to effective teaching. A teacher must have interest in his/her learners.

He/she must manipulate his/her students into such a state of interest in what he/she is going to teach them. Hence, other objects of attention get banished from their minds. Students may be interested in learning commercial subjects but all in all there must be school inspection to monitor teaching process. Hence, school inspection is necessary in order to ensure quality assurance of what is taught in schools. All in all students interest in learning a subject should be composed with school inspection to see whether students are taught the right syllabus of the subject which will lead to good examination performance.

#### **2.4 School Inspection**

School inspection is defined as the process of ensuring that schools comply with the Tanzanian Education Act No. 25 of 1978 and ascertaining whether schools are being properly and efficiently managed (URT (f), 2010). School inspection is also described as a system with three main functions; to make clear national performance standards and targets, to guide and support all schools in achieving them, and to assess the progress made by individual schools in reaching them (SAFEA, 2012).

In England, for example, the role of the inspectorate is to provide an independent external assessment in the drive to reform and strengthen public services' which lead to 'school improvement in broader outcomes for children and young people, including well-being (Ofsted, 2007; Whitby, 2010). Hence the inspection process was generally perceived by school leaders as 'contributing to school improvement and as a force to drive forward progress. Inspection was also generally perceived to



have achieved a 'direct positive impact on school improvement in terms of assessment and, to some extent, quality of teaching, and to have contributed to attainment. Also, the preliminary results from a three-year European study from 2011 to 2012 (Ehren, 2012) into the effect of school inspections on the quality of education reveals that teachers perception on those schools that were inspected had also implemented more changes in terms of quality improvement and organized more self-evaluation activities in the school

There is also a contrasting finding from an investigation on the effect of Dutch primary school inspections on test scores (Wolf *et al.*, 2009) revealed that: the scores increased by 2 percents to 3 percents of a standard deviation inspections and concluded that inspections do no harm but seem to have little or no effect on student performance and in turn lead to slightly better school performance.

This conclusion needs to be taken with caution and is likely to vary according to how developed education system is arguably, school inspection that operates efficiently and effectively is likely to have a strong impact on student performance and in turn lead to better school performance where education systems are developing like in Tanzania. As support agents; they help to bridge the gaps through their professional advice caused by several deficiencies existing across the schools (like inadequate professional development among teachers, shortages of teachers and textbooks). In Tanzania school inspection aims at monitoring the delivery of education and the adherence to the stipulated curriculum and the standards set, in order to safeguard good quality in education.

On the other hand, school inspection can have weakening impact on student performance if it is not dynamic in its mode of operation. School inspection has high potential in enhancing student performance. This is reflected in findings of several studies in Tanzania. For instance a large scale International research on the conditions of schooling in fifteen countries in Southern and Eastern Africa including Tanzania known as Southern and Eastern Africa Consortium for Monitoring Educational Quality (SACMEQ) Project II (Mrutu , Ponera and Nkumbi, 2005), was conducted to standard 6 pupils in reading and mathematics. The study revealed among other findings that teachers perceived the process of inspection as ‘bringing new ideas’ and ‘suggesting improving teaching methods ‘and coming to provide professional advice.

Controller and Auditor General’s (CAG) performance report ( URT (g),2008) on school inspection programme on mathematics and science subjects for secondary schools in Tanzania mainland focused on how and to what extent the School Inspectorate genuinely addresses the issue of poor performing students in mathematics and science subjects in secondary schools, and how it operates in terms of planning, conducting school inspections in order to achieve the intended objectives.

The report noted that there are no clear priorities on poor performing students in mathematics and science subjects in the School Inspectorate’s own annual and operational planning for inspection. The issue of poor performing students is not addressed in issued guidelines to the school inspectors.

The guidelines contribute to a more or less standardized behavior with the inspections and this hampers the possibility for the school inspectors to provide the Government with adequate information, like advices on targeted and cost-effective measures, and on how to improve the education system in the country. In addition, the inspectorate did not effectively communicate and follow up on implementation of its recommendations and failed to monitor the effectiveness of school inspections. We have been discussing school inspectorate in general on quality assurance in ordinary level secondary schools, now we are going to dwell on studies conducted specifically in commercial subjects in Tanzania.

## **2.5 Studies with Direct Bearing on Commercial Subjects in Tanzania**

Students' poor performance in commercial subjects in Tanzania at ordinary level secondary schools has not been widely researched. However, few descriptive case studies are available. For example, Mampangwa (2005) studied the factors influencing performance in commercial subjects in ordinary level secondary school in two schools namely Kasulu and Bongwe, both in Kasulu town in Kigoma Region, Tanzania using seven commercial subject teachers and 54 Form 3 and 4 students in the two schools. He employed questionnaires, interviews, historical archives and observation to collect data.

The results indicated a significant proportion of unqualified commercial subject teachers (100 percent at Bongwe Secondary School and 50 percent at Kasulu Secondary School). These were Form 6 leavers with no teacher training course, and inadequate teaching and learning materials. In addition, the schools taught 5 periods

instead of 7 periods per week for Form 3 and 4. He concluded that these were associated with student's poor performance among other factors that declined the subject performance. These findings and conclusions were similar to findings of two other similar studies carried out by Sengerema (2004) and Mboya (2004).

Sengerema (2004) investigated factors influencing poor performance in commercial subjects at Kazima, Isevyu and Uyui secondary schools in Tabora Municipality focusing on 240 students in Form 3 and 4. He employed questionnaires, interviews, analyzed documentary evidence from the schools and the National Examination results to collect data. His findings were similar to those in Mampangwa (2005) study but additionally, he found that there were poor library facilities and up-to-date teaching and learning materials, superficial coverage of the syllabus (57.5 percent) and failure to comprehend subjects taught in English language due to abrupt use of English language as medium of instruction to Form One students who were taught in Kiswahili throughout their primary education.

Mboya (2004) investigated causes of the declining performance in commercial subjects at ordinary level in 3 schools namely Ngarenaro, Arusha Day and Arusha Meru secondary schools in Arusha Municipal. He targeted students of Forms 3 and 4 and teachers teaching commercial subjects in the 3 schools. He used questionnaires, interviews, observation schedules on teaching/learning process; pupil habits, the general school environment and historical records.

Data gathered were quantitative and qualitative. The focus of the study was on 3 assumptions: poorly trained teachers, lack of teaching/learning materials and non-

proficiency of instructional language, these were anticipated as leading to poor academic performance.

Then results indicated that the highest qualification of commercial subjects teachers in the 3 schools investigated was diploma in education. A critical shortage of teaching and learning materials where in one school (Arusha Day), there were no textbooks at all. Library facility was not available in two schools and where there was library; the books found were not of commercial subjects and were obsolete. Other forms of teaching and learning materials like audio visual were not available in all 3 schools.

Poor mastery of instructional language by students inhibited their understanding of concepts and was severed by some teachers who could not clarify concepts because they had limited vocabulary, limited fluency and poor grammar. The researcher concluded that this situation deprived students and teachers of independent learning and effective teaching respectively, and in turn resulting in poor performance.

The findings on teacher qualifications need to be interpreted with caution in the case of Tanzania by considering the academic and professional level of the diploma teachers visa vie the teaching level (o- level) on the one hand; and the ministry teaching norm on the other. Further consideration of research findings reported elsewhere in the literature review indicate that teacher qualifications such as certification and a degree in the field to be taught are very significantly and positively correlated with student outcomes but characteristics such as education

level (percentage of teachers with master's degrees) show positive but less strong relationships with education outcomes (Hammond, 2000).

On the other hand, local research findings point that the problem of mastery of instructional language by both students and some teachers undermines the teaching and learning process and hence signal urgency for this study to explore more where teachers and students find difficulties in communicating within the broader context of communication as articulated in the referenced literature on teachers professional ability to communicate effectively.

It has been seen that since 2005 no studies have been done on the tremendous failure in commercial subjects despite the studies done by Mampangwa (2005), Sengerema (2004) and Mboya (2004). This study therefore attempted to find out the factors influencing poor examination performance in commercial subjects in ordinary level secondary schools between 2006 and 2011.

## **2.6 Conclusion**

This chapter has explained some of the key concepts; academic performance, the meaning of commercial subjects and importance of commercial subjects in society's development. Students issues have been raised that influence student's academic performance in schools. They include qualities of a good teacher, teaching and learning resources and school inspection. These issues were explained through data collection and analysis in order to understand factors which influence poor examination performance in commercial subjects in ordinary level secondary

schools in Ilala Municipality. It has been observed in all these studies that there has been no study done on the factors which influence students' academic performance in commercial subjects in Ilala Municipality after the re- introduction of commercial subjects in secondary schools which was in 2005 to date. The findings established why there is tremendous failure in commercial subjects during this period of re-introduction of commercial subjects. Therefore this study anticipates filling this gap. The next chapter provides the methodology which were used during data collection and the method of data analysis.

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **3.0 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.1 Introduction**

This chapter explains the research approach and it justifies the choice of qualitative approach in this study which focused on the factors which influence poor examination performance in commercial subjects in the chosen secondary schools in Ilala Municipality. The second part describes in detail how the research was conducted, methods of data collection and procedures for data analysis.

##### **3.1.1 Research Approach**

Qualitative approach was used in this research. Research approach depends on the problem to be researched. Therefore the choice of the approach depends on what the research was trying to find out (Silverman, 2011). This research adopted a qualitative research approach for the following reasons: the qualitative approach deals with social phenomena and the anticipated research is a social phenomenon. In this approach factors influencing poor examination performance in commercial subjects in O- level secondary schools in Ilala Municipality were smoothly discovered, because qualitative approach is social centered. It allows probing in the person's inner issues which can not be discovered by quantitative research approach through questionnaire.

This approach was also chosen because of its flexibility in research design and data collection. The research design is not completely specified in advance, it was



continued to be remolded as the fieldwork continued. In this case the researcher did not approach the study with hypotheses to test or standardized questions to answer. Therefore, though the researcher has an idea of the problem, he/she cannot predict the answer from the participant. Although this approach is good in research of social phenomenon still it has limitations.

### **3.1.2 Limitations of Qualitative Approach**

Hughes (2006) summarises limitations of qualitative approach as follows: The problem of adequate validity or reliability is a major criticism. Because of the subjective nature of qualitative data and its origin in single contexts, it is difficult to apply conventional standards of reliability and validity. To alleviate this truth triangulation was used. Therefore interviews, focus group discussion (FGD), observation and checklists were used to bring credibility of data. Also unlike quantitative, qualitative findings cannot be generalised because of in-depth nature of the study as it cannot cover a large area to deserve generalization. Moreover, the researcher strived to be neutral, non-judgmental, and report what is found in a balanced way.

## **3.2 Study Area**

The research covered Ilala Municipality in Dar es Salaam Region. Ilala Municipality had 56 commercial ordinary level secondary schools; out of them 4 were old government secondary schools, 18 were community based secondary schools and 34 were private secondary schools (MSEO,2013). The researcher decided to choose three (03) secondary schools only due to limitations of resources and time.

Therefore, three schools were purposefully selected based on the following criteria: One school was an old Government secondary school, the second was community based secondary school and the third was a private secondary school. These schools are diverse and therefore the study attempted to find out if they have similarities or differences in terms of teaching and learning facilities for commercial subjects such as text books, libraries, as well as teachers. It also found out if there were diversities in terms of teaching documents like schemes of work; lesson plans, home works, tests and subject timetables.

The study found out whether the schools were well equipped to teach commercial subjects and was able to lead students to success. Also the study tried to find out whether the school environments were conducive for learning. On this basis the following schools were selected.

**Table 3.1: Secondary Schools Selected in Ilala Municipality**

Ilala Municipality Secondary Schools	Secondary Categories		
	Old Government	Community	Private
Jangwani Secondary School	√		
Mnazi mmoja Secondary School		√	
Tusiime Secondary School			√

Source: Field Data, (2012)

### **3.3 Population Sample**

Secondary schools in Tanzania are of three types: Government secondary schools, Community based secondary schools (with support from government) and private secondary schools. Ilala Municipality has 55 secondary schools offering commercial subjects. Students in these schools in Ilala municipality were the targeted population of the study.

### **3.4 Sample**

Firstly, the sample was drawn from Form Four of each school. That means 8 students were selected from Form Four classes which made up a total of 24 students. The issue of gender was not observed as old government ordinary level secondary schools in Ilala municipality are either boys or girls schools. Students provided first hand information on factors influencing poor examination performance in commercial subjects in the above mentioned types of secondary schools. The sample also included other participants due to their responsibilities.

Secondly, six commercial subjects' teachers (2 from each selected school; 1 for book keeping and 1 for commerce) were also included in the sample. Teachers play an indispensable role in the teaching and learning process. They are expected to provide the researcher with practical experiences of factors influencing poor examination performance in commercial subjects in those chosen schools. They provided first hand information from the teaching point of view.

Thirdly, 3 heads of commercial subjects' departments; one from each selected secondary school included. Heads of departments have a monitoring role over commercial subject teachers in the teaching and learning of commercial subjects. Heads of departments therefore provided over all insight on the factors influencing poor examination performance in commercial subjects in their ordinary level secondary schools.

Fourthly, 3 Heads of schools, one from each selected secondary school were included. This choice was made on the assumption that heads who are internal

inspectors and supervisors have additional quality information in terms of administration and management insights on the factors influencing poor examination performance in commercial subjects in their schools. Therefore the sample was made up of 36 participants.

### **3.5 The Sampling Procedures**

Random sampling was applied to students in the selection of the sample. Random sampling is the method of sample selection which gives each possible sample combination an equal probability of being picked up and each item in the entire population to have equal chance of being included in the sample (Kothari 2004). A purposive sampling was applied to teachers, heads of departments and heads of schools. Hence purposive sampling is a type of sampling whereby items for the sample are deliberately selected by the researcher; his/her choice concerning the items remains supreme (Kothari, 2004).

### **3.6 Methods of Data Collection**

#### **3.6.1 Interviews**

Interviews are the common method of collecting data in any qualitative study. This study used semi-structured interviews as the main method of data collection where necessary in depth interviews was used. Hornby (1989) as quoted in Rwegelera (2010) defines an interview as the meeting in which a researcher asks somebody questions in order to find out his or her views. Also, Bogdan and Birklen (1992) define interview as face-to-face version of the questionnaire. According to Kothari (2004) interview is a method of collecting data which involves presentation of oral-

verbal stimuli and reply in terms of oral-verbal responses through personal interviews and telephone interviews. Interviews allows a researcher to ask the question, ‘‘Why’’. It is argued that the interview enables a researcher to explore some topics in depth and discover the reasons and motivations which make the participants act in a certain way. Hence, interview is systematic way of talking and listening to people.

Rationale for selecting interview method was based on the potential the method has to help the researcher obtain more information and in greater depth, through probing beyond the predetermined questions. Semi structured interview was selected because unlike the structured interview, the researcher is free to ask additional detailed questions that can explore more deeply into the participants deep inner feelings, that means a researcher does not have to stick to the interview guide only. Therefore the researcher used personal interviews in collecting data from Form Four students (4 from each school) and their commercial subjects’ teachers (2 from each school), heads of commercial subjects department (1 from each school) and heads of school (1 from each school).

### **3.6.2 Focus Group Discussion (FGD)**

The objective of focused group discussion was to get high-quality data in a social context where people could consider their own views in the context of the views of others, and where new ideas and perspectives could be introduced. Powell *et al.* (1996) define a focused group as a group of individuals selected and assembled by researchers to discuss and comment on, from personal experience about the topic

which is the subject of the research. Unlike the individual interviews, which aim to obtain individual attitudes, beliefs and feelings, focus groups interviews (discussion) elicit a variety of views and emotional processes within a group context. The focus group interview enables the researcher to gain a larger amount of information in a shorter period of time, through use of an interview guide by a researcher. In this sense focus groups discussion are not natural but organized events. The present study used focus group discussion method for 8 students (form four) in each selected schools to explore their views on factors that influencing poor examination performance in commercial subjects in ordinary level secondary schools in Ilala Municipality.

The interviews were administered by the researcher; time and place were depending on the suitability for the participants. In order to supplement data obtained from personal interviews and focus group discussion, observation, and documentary analysis was also applied.

### **3.6.3 Observation**

Marshall and Rossman (1999) define observation as "the systematic description of events and behaviours in the social setting chosen for study". This method implies the collection of information by way of investigators own observation, without interviewing the participant. The information obtained relates to what is currently happening and is not complicated by either the past behaviour or future intentions or attitudes of participants (Kothari, 2004). When the investigator observes by making himself more or less a member of the group he /she is observing so that, she/he can

experience what members of the group experience. This kind of observation is called participant observation.

In the present study non-participatory observation was used to verify or abolish information provided in interviews and focus group discussions (face-to-face talking). It was particularly used to verify teacher's professional ability to communicate effectively especially on teacher students interactions during the teaching and learning processes. Also, the researcher observed the teacher mastery of subject matter in line with qualifications of commercial subjects' teachers, teacher motivation as well as student interest in learning commercial subjects.

#### **3.6.4 Documentary Analysis**

A document is a source of data in its own right (Denscombe, 1998). Documents are described as communications between parties in the study, where the researcher acts as verifier (Tellis, 1997). According to Kombo and Tromp (2011) there are two major sources of data used in research. These are primary and secondary sources. Primary sources are data gathered directly from participants through interviews, focused group discussions, observation, circulars, minutes from meetings, newsletters, newspapers, teaching documents and photographs.

On the other side, a secondary source involves gathering data that already has been collected by somebody else. Examples of secondary data are those involved in collection and analysis of published materials from books, journal materials and electronically stored information. These sources are used because written materials

can provide important insights into both public and private opinions. Hence, documents were also vital source of data in this study.

### **3.7 Limitation of the Study**

In this study information was obtained and generally social factors did not limit implementation of the study except information through tape recording where two teachers refused to be taped while being interviewed. Nevertheless the researcher took notes all along the interview. Due to many responsibilities among school heads, it was difficult to get them for interview. This meant visiting the schools more frequently than expected; which extended the researcher's timetable for accomplishing the field exercise.

The target sample of teachers was achieved but one teacher in one school was teaching both commerce and Book Keeping subjects, making the actual number of teachers 5 instead of 6. Time of the study was estimated to start in November, 2013 until end of February 2014. However due to annual year examinations and closure of schools for December holidays, data collection started in the third week of January, 2014 and ended in the fourth week of February, 2014. Data processing, analysis and report writing started during the first week of March, 2014 and ended during the second week of July, 2014.

### **3.8 Data Analysis Plan**

#### **3.8.1 Qualitative Data Analysis**

Bogdan and Birklen (1982) define qualitative data analysis as working with data, organizing it, breaking it into manageable units, synthesizing it, searching for



patterns, discovering what is important and what is to be learned, and deciding what you will tell others. Also, Marshall and Rossman (1999) describe it as a process of data reduction and interpretation. Data reduction means that "the reams of collected data are brought into manageable chunks" and interpretation "brings meaning and insight to the words and acts of the participants in the study". Much of the data reduction process occurs through segmenting and coding the data in a systematic way.

In this study data were analyzed as follows:

Firstly, all recorded interviews were dated, copied out and labeled according to when it was collected. The transcriptions were read for grammar corrections. Secondly, the raw data were sorted by categories (coded) and research questions used as guide to generate a framework for the categories. Words, phrases or events that appeared to be similar were grouped into the same category. These categories were gradually modified or replaced during the subsequent stages of analysis that followed.

Thirdly, re-examination of the categories identified to determine how they are linked. The discrete categories identified in coding were compared and combined in new ways as the researcher began to assemble the big picture. Analyses of the themes were done strictly according to the issues pinpointed in the literature review and the theoretical framework. At this stage, large amount of unorganized data were reduced into a manageable and analytical meaningful body of data. Miles and Huberman (1994) argue that data reduction is logical part of data analysis in qualitative research because processing huge amount of data is difficult and time-consuming.

### **3.8.2 Documentary Data Analysis**

Data obtained from documents were reviewed, grouped together to show trends and widen the scope of understanding the factors influencing poor examination performance in commercial subjects in ordinary level secondary schools in Ilala Municipality. The data complemented data generated from interviews and observation. Hence documentary data were analyzed along with the following lines:

#### **3.8.2.1 Periodisation of Document**

Periodisation is the attempt to categorize universal history or divide time into named blocks (Wikipedia, 2013). This help the researcher determined the relevance of the document to the study. Hence, the theoretical location in the document helped the researcher to understand point of reference of the documents in relation to the study in order to avoid unfairness and derailment.

#### **3.8.2.2 Theoretical stance**

Theoretical stance is described as theoretical basis from which textual features, their attributes, and their structural relations are postulated. In many fields (e.g. classical metrics) scholars agree on many or all of the pertinent features and their characteristics in their theories. However, other scholars disagree without the theoretical bases of the disagreement (Wikipedia, 2013). Therefore, the theoretical location in the document helped the researcher to understand the direction of the documents in relation to the study in order to avoid unfairness and disorder.

#### **3.8.2.3 The Principle of Collaboration**

Bayerlein and Harris (2004) describes collaboration as the collective work of two or

more individuals where the work is undertaken with a sense of shared purpose and direction that is attentive, responsive, and adaptive to the environment. The principle of collaboration, from the courts of law perspective refers to how many times have the same issue been said or written by different people (Rwegelera, 2010). In this context therefore, the principle of collaboration was used in order to be sure of the reliability of the argument under study.

### **3.8.3 Conclusion**

The analysis of data from qualitative findings were triangulated with those obtained from observation and documentary analysis to complement explanations of the issues discussed in the literature review and those observed from documentary analysis.

## **3.9 Validity and Reliability of Data**

Validity and reliability of data depends on the instruments used in the research (Kothari, 2004). Validity is the extent which an instrument measures what is intended. In this case, findings must accurately describe the phenomena being researched and must ensure that element of the main issue to be covered in the research are fair representation of wider issue under investigation. In order to insure validity of the data collected and reliability of research instruments, a pilot study was conducted in one government secondary school in Ilala Municipality. Also the supervisor assisted to refine the instruments focusing on study, research tasks and questions. Reliability of data was observed through triangulation method of data collection (one to one interviews, focus group discussions, observation and

documentary analysis). In order to facilitate understanding between the research and participant, the research instruments need to be prepared in language that will be easily understood to respondents (Best and Kahn, 2006).

### **3.10 Ethical Issues Consideration**

The researcher ensured that the study adhered to human rights and national policies. Therefore, attention was paid to rules and regulations during proposal writing and when conducting the research in the field. The research findings are represented in chapter four in the extent of research task advanced in this study.

## **CHAPTER FOUR**

### **4.0 DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS**

#### **4.1 Introduction**

The study investigated factors influencing poor examination performance in commercial subjects in Tanzania ordinary level secondary schools in Ilala Municipality. Four research objectives guided the study. Data emanated from 4 types of participants, which included twenty four (24) commercial subjects students, five teachers (5), three (3) heads of commercial subjects departments, and three (3) heads of schools. This chapter presents the findings that originated from the participants above. Hence the findings from the study in this chapter (4) are presented and analyzed according to the themes derived from four research objectives. Data collection process took about six (6) hours or more according to the availability of participants.

Data presentation was selective. It was not possible to present all stories. Stake (1995) in Rwegelera's(2010), comments that choice is inevitable although many researchers would like to tell the whole story. According to this study, choice and selection was made as well as decision on how much and on what to tell others according to the study purpose.

In this study, names of the participants and secondary schools visited are not mentioned due to confidentiality and research ethics. Interviews were tape recorded and also note books were used. Data was transcribed, analyzed and sorted according

to specific objectives of this study. The theme that follows will focus on presentation and analysis of data, and discuss findings of teachers' qualities in teaching commercial subjects.

## **4.2 Teachers' Qualities in Teaching Commercial Subjects**

Goe et al (2008) identified a few strong and consistent teacher quality predictors of student achievement, elaborated teacher qualifications as credentials that teachers bring with them when they enter the classroom. Raver (2003) has identified a few strong and consistent teachers' quality predictors of student achievement including teacher's qualifications (certification), knowledge and experiences under this theme of teachers' qualities in teaching commercial subjects, the study came out with the following sub themes:

- i) Teachers academic and professional qualifications
- ii) Teachers experience
- iii) In-service training
- iv) English as a medium of instruction
- v) Teacher motivation
- vi) Teacher mastery of subject matter

### **4.2.1 Teachers Academic And Professional Qualifications**

Academic qualification of teachers has relationship with students' performance in examination. This study sought information on teachers' academic qualification of commercial subject teachers. Interview with commercial subjects teachers on their academic and professional qualifications and a review of school administration

documentary were used. Their responses were analyzed and are reflected in Table 4.1.

**Table 4.1: Distribution of Commercial Subject Teachers and their Academic and Professional Qualifications**

<b>Masters- Ed</b>	<b>Degree-Ed</b>	<b>Dip-Ed</b>	<b>Dip-Ed failure</b>	<b>No training</b>	<b>Total</b>
-	03	01	01	-	05

Source: Research data

It was revealed that, three (3) teachers were graduates with degree in education; one had a diploma in education. However, one teacher was a failure of diploma in education. Another teacher had not studied commercial subjects at A-level, she studied HGK instead. Can these types of teachers lead students taking commercial subjects to good examination performance? In addition, one wonders how a teacher who failed in his/her academic subjects can teach others the subject he/she has failed in her examinations. Presumably his/her product (students) will also be failures. Now let's observe the heads of commercial subjects departments' academic qualifications as compared to commercial subject teachers. Interview with heads of commercial subjects departments on their academic and professional qualifications, data was collected from school administration documentary review.

On other hand, heads of commercial departments when asked what their academic and professional qualifications were, it was found that two of them had diploma in education while one had a degree in education. In addition, heads of commercial subjects departments when probed on the subjects they studied at Ordinary and

Advanced secondary education, it was disclosed that all the three heads of departments studied commercial subjects in ordinary level secondary education and Economics, Commerce and Accounting (ECA) at A-level secondary education.

The findings indicated that most of heads of commercial subjects departments are diploma holders while the majority of subject teachers were degree holders. Heading departments needs wider content knowledge, in the area of specialization, among other characteristics, preferably at degree level in order to command confidence in discharging leadership roles in the department.

The same question which was asked to teachers and heads of departments was also asked to heads of schools concerning their academic and professional qualifications.

The findings indicated that all school heads (in the 3 visited secondary schools) were holders of Bachelor of education degrees. As expected, all heads were teachers by profession. However, the question is: are they trained to manage schools and are they vocal enough to advice the owners of schools (government and private) on the needs of their schools and about the effects of some of the policies set by them on student learning?

Overall, teachers and heads of commercial subject departments should have a command of their subjects and thorough knowledge on commercial subjects they teach in order that their students benefit from their knowledge. But in this study it was observed that one teacher was a diploma failure and another one although she studied commercial subjects O-level she opted for HGK (History, Geography and Kiswahili) A-level education. These subjects are purely arts subjects and had no



connection with commercial subjects of what she learnt at ordinary level. However, the same teacher then opted to study a degree in education with commerce and accountancy (BECA) at university level. Obviously with this kind of teachers, it is doubtful if they can deliver commercial subjects contents effectively. Hence the effect can spread to students as they would fail the commercial subjects' examination. This finding is supported by Sengerema (2005) and Mampangwa (2004), who found teachers with poor academic qualification being one of the likely factors that influence students' poor examination performance.

#### **4.2.2 Teachers' Experience in Teaching Commercial Subjects**

This study also sought information on teachers' academic experience in teaching commercial subjects. Interview with commercial subjects teachers on their academic and professional qualifications and a review of school administration documentary were used.

In the visited secondary schools, teachers' experience ranged from 3 years to 13 years. Majority of them had an experience ranging from 5 to 13 years. Adeyemi (2008) commented that teachers' teaching experience was significant with students' learning outcomes as measured by their performance in the secondary school certificate examinations.

Schools having more teachers with five years and above teaching experience achieved better results than schools having more teachers with less than five years teaching experience. In this case, more than half of commercial subject teachers in

the visited secondary schools had adequate teaching experience to achieve better results. However, one school had a commerce and bookkeeping teacher whose teaching experience was 13 years.

From this study two teachers have teaching experience of less than five years and three teachers who had five and above years of teaching experience as it were observed above. Another striking issue was a diploma failure that had also a teaching experience of five years and worse enough she was teaching form four class who were preparing themselves to sit for their final examination. In this case if the performance of students in commercial subjects is based in teaching experience then the two teachers with less teaching experience and the failed teacher though with five years experience would affect the teaching of commercial subjects. Therefore there is no doubt that these commercial students were affected in their academic performance by this factor.

Apart from commercial teachers' teaching experience, Heads of commercial subjects departments were asked as how long they had been teaching commercial subjects. It was found out that, all 3 heads of departments had a teaching experience of between 5 and 10 years. Although they had long teaching experience in commercial subjects, they lacked experience in heading commercial departments. Only one teacher had two years experience the rest had only one year.

The heads of departments' experience is of short duration. It takes time to learn the situation in the department and in heading the department. It is expected that heads

of departments would have to start planning what the head is aiming to be implemented for the benefit of students. Over all, heads of commercial department had short experience in heading commercial department; which is one of the likely factors that influence students' poor examination performance.

#### **4.2.3 In-service Training for Commercial Subject Teachers**

A teacher's central role in the teaching and learning process is arguably indisputable. In-service training of teachers is among the teacher characteristics that define a teacher and that have a big impact on student achievement. This aspect is paramount in ensuring that teachers are kept abreast of the contemporary changes in their professionalism after their pre-service training. Mrutu *et al* (2005). In this study teachers were probed if they had received any in-service training. The findings showed that only one (1) teacher out of five (5) had received in-service training. The teacher said: *"I received training on how to set book-keeping examination at Bagamoyo in 2010. That's all since then I haven't gone to any training"*

Likewise, all heads of department had not received any in-service training and only one (1) out of 3 school heads had received in-service training. It is clear that the majority of commercial subject teachers interviewed had not received in service training. They also used their old methods (content based) in teaching commercial subjects.

Teachers have rust mind, how can they lead students' to good performance in the commercial subjects? They are not aware of occurring changes in the subjects. Rowe's (2003) concluded that 'what matters most' is quality teachers and teaching,

supported by teacher professional development including in-service training. Absence of commercial teachers' regular in service training makes rust minds worse and, hence contributes to students' poor examination performance.

In-service training is paramount in exposing teachers to contemporary knowledge and skills in their areas of specialization, in this case commercial subjects. In this study, teachers were disadvantaged as they heavily relied on the pre-service training. They probably faced challenges in adapting themselves with new developments in commercial knowledge. One commerce teacher had this to tell: *"We are using old syllabus. Old methods, we are not up to date in the new teaching methods and this affects us much, and we hear that teaching is now competence based but here we don't know what it is all about. So Madam we need in-service training in order to up date us so that we can teach commercial subjects effectively for the benefit of our students. Apart from this, we are using the 1997 syllabus, which is 14 years old!"*

In order to have a good output, that is good academic performance, teachers should be up to date in teaching skills and use up to date syllabus". Worse still, heads of commercial departments had not received in-service training in order to be able to guide others in new skills in teaching the subjects. In addition, it was found out that one out of three heads of schools had received in-service training. The training was not adequate in overseeing the teaching and learning process. It is conclusive to say that teachers minds were rust due to inadequate in-service training; hence a likely factor that influence students' poor examination performance. Apart from teacher in

service training in commercial subjects let us look at English as the language of instruction in teaching commercial subjects in secondary schools.

#### **4.2.4 English as a Medium of Instruction In Teaching Commercial Subjects**

Teachers were asked whether they were conversant with the language of instruction (English) in teaching commercial subjects, one of the three teachers had this to say:

*“We are conversant with English language as a medium of instructions”,*

But, the other two teachers stated that they were not conversant with English. One teacher said: *“We are not conversant with English because we use mostly Kiswahili at school and in our home environments”*.

We are used to Kiswahili most of the time even our students use Kiswahili at school compounds and at their home environments. The view was not far from another teacher who narrated: *“I am semi-conversant in English language, it is my third language. Most of the time I use Kiswahili language for communication in the school environments’ and in the community where I live. All the communication for me is always in Kiswahili. Hence, no wonder for me not to be fluent in English, and I feel if I teach my students in Kiswahili, they will understand better”*.

What is expected from teachers like those above who teach students of commercial subjects in Kiswahili? It is a problem because the examination is set in English and the examination instructions are in English except for Kiswahili subject. In addition, the answers must be in English too. Therefore students who are taught in Kiswahili are disadvantaged because they cannot do examinations effectively and hence

making language one of the factors likely to contribute to students' poor examination performance in commercial subjects.

Stander (2006) concluded that, factors contributing to poor second language acquisition and academic achievement include poor language teaching by teachers whose own English proficiency is limited. The above findings were supported by class observation during actual teaching of Form 4 sampled students where findings revealed that the commerce and book keeping teachers in two of the visited schools used more Kiswahili than English when clarifying concepts and in asking and answering students' questions. In one school, the situation was worse for Book keeping teacher whose A-level combination was HGK. The teacher used Kiswahili dominantly when teaching.

In this light good performance in commercial subjects is a dream because national examination is set in English language. No doubt students will be in difficult situation in trying to answer commercial subjects questions in English while they were taught in Kiswahili language throughout. Teachers were asked on whether commercial subject's students mastered English language, they responded with a variety of views. Book keeping teacher in one school said: *"Students did not have a good mastery of English language; Students don't master English and they ask questions in Kiswahili instead of English"*

In another school, both Commerce and Book keeping teachers commented: *"Some students were not good in English language except those who came from English medium primary schools"*

However, the Book keeping teacher added: *“I have to use Kiswahili to explain many concepts to enable them understand”*

The Commerce teacher’s response in another school was not different from that given by the commerce teacher in the previous school. She said: *“Students who came from English medium schools are trying their level best to use English in class while others mix both English and Kiswahili”*.

In the third visited secondary school it was revealed that most students understood English but a few did not. Commerce subject teacher from this school explained: *“Majority of the students are conversant in the language. I encourage the few who are not conversant to speak English and correct them when they go wrong”*

The researcher probed; what do you think makes them conversant with the language? The teacher explained: *“Most students in Form Four classes came from English medium primary schools that are why they do not pose English language as problem. They understand easily when they are taught in English”*

On the other hand, The Book keeping teacher from the third secondary school had similar views but added: *“Sometimes I have to mix Kiswahili and English to help the few who had difficulties in mastery of English language”*.

Mboya (2004) had similar findings that, poor mastery of instructional language by students inhibited their understanding of concepts and was severed by some teachers

who could not clarify concepts because they had limited vocabulary, limited fluency and poor grammar. The situation is clearly dominant in government secondary schools whose form one intake is largely from Kiswahili medium government primary schools. It is not surprising that commercial subjects students are weak in English language.

The findings of the study also, show that same teachers were not conversant with teaching commercial subject by using English (the recommended medium of instruction) for teaching in secondary schools. They used Kiswahili and English interchangeably to teach commercial subjects. Worse still, because of the language barrier, one teacher opted to dictate bookkeeping subject notes and questions but did not check students exercise books to see whether what they had written was correct or not.

Effective teacher-student communication can inspire or motivate a student to become more interested to learn. It can also de-motivate the students if the teacher is not interacting warmly and in a friendly manner with his/her students. Teven (2001) advances that teachers who have open, and friendly communication styles, or those who do not exhibit verbal aggressiveness and use a variety of non-verbal immediacy behaviours promote student achievement. The findings of this study are in agreement with findings of studies conducted elsewhere which reveal that limited language proficiency of teachers is a factor that contributes to poor academic achievement (Standers, 2006). Overall, the results reveal a serious professional inability for effective communication between some commercial subject teachers and



their students. Although not unexpected, the inability is compounded by the poor English background of the commercial subjects' teachers and their students.

#### **4.2.5 Teachers' Motivation**

Motivation may be defined as the amount of effort a teacher desires to exert in a particular class (Richmond, 1990). In line with this definition, motivation is thought to be responsible for "why people decide to do something, how long they are willing to sustain the activity and how hard they are going to pursue it" (Dörnyei, 2001). Kreps, (1990) classifies motivation as intrinsic motivation, which an individual has for the enjoyment of an activity, and extrinsic motivation that an individual has for an activity due to a reward received for performing the activity. Teachers were asked on whether they were motivated to teach commercial subjects. A teacher from one school commented: *"I am not motivated because my salary is low, teaching resources for commercial subjects are inadequate and I have not been promoted for 9 years"*.

The same teacher in this school lamented about not being motivated to teach the subject, she had this to add: *"I am not motivated I just sit idle in the staff room during my period, I tell my students to study on their own. What shall I do, there are no commercial subjects textbooks in this school"*.

Csikszentmihalyi (1990) has proposed that individuals reach a state of happiness and satisfaction when they are involved in an activity and are functioning at the peak of their abilities. This teacher's lamentations reflect frustrations and in turn s/he

exercise negligence in her/his work. There are libraries and schools where she would have gone to seek for study materials on commercial subjects. She would have visited the internet to search her subject materials at least to try at her level best to help students learn. Another teacher in another school gave views that were different from her fellow teachers that she liked to teach commercial subjects, and here she narrates: *“I am motivated, I like teaching commercial subjects because they are my best subjects since O-level. There are no commercial subjects’ books here at this school but I try to find something to teach students”*

Intrinsic motivation- inner push encourages people to do things, if they are in difficulty they will always try. This is a good spirit to be acquired by teachers to try to find a way to help students in a difficult learning situation like that found in the previously reported secondary school.

Teachers were interviewed on whether they were interested in teaching commercial subjects or not? The findings indicated that all teachers in secondary schools visited were interested in teaching commercial subjects. Some of these teachers were driven by own interests especially intrinsic. This is revealed by a book keeping teacher in one school who had this to tell: *“I like to teach commercial subjects from the button of my heart because I like to become a lecturer in future”*.

In the private school they stated that they were motivated to teach commercial subjects. For instance the Book keeping teacher stated: *“Yes I’m motivated because these subjects are very practical subjects, I am also paid good allowance and salary”*.

On the contrary, one commercial head of department in one school who was heading a department with an acute shortage of teaching and learning materials said this in reference to her reasons for lacking motivation in her capacity: *“The school has no books for commercial subjects and I have no department office and I have never been selected for marking National Examinations. Worse still I have not been promoted for more than ten years. I regard myself as a neglected teacher and therefore I fail to encourage my fellow teachers in the department”*.

The head of department in another secondary school had almost similar experiences to the above. He narrated: *“I have no responsibility allowance; I experience an acute shortage of books at our school. I have no motivation. My students do not perform well in national examinations”*

The experience of the head of commercial department in the visited private secondary school was quite different from the previous views of heads of commercial departments in a government school. The head was very happy with her position. She said: *“I am happy madam with my work and it does not give me headache. I like it. I am motivated as books are available and I am respected as the head of department. I am very happy my students perform well each year”*.

All visited schools had each, a commercial subject head of department. However in two of the visited (both government owned) secondary schools, the heads of departments were frustrated and had no motivation for work! The head of commercial subjects in the private secondary school was very happy with her

position. This shows clearly that school managements of government secondary schools are not taking care of their teachers, they don't motivate them for instance, providing enabling teaching environment for their work or giving them timely promotions. Hence heads of departments for the government secondary schools are not likely to have good output in their work. It would not be surprising therefore that they do not make close supervision on teachers under their departments.

Unlike the head of department in the government secondary school, the head of department in the private secondary school said: *"I usually make close supervision by checking the teachers work and make sure they are doing well. That is why we get good harvest each year"*.

It is very much discouraging to note teachers and heads of departments who are working in government secondary schools are less motivated in executing their responsibilities. It is worrying about what could be the future of these innocent commercial students who are taught by less motivated teachers! Will students do better in their examination in this situation?

In this study, the findings showed that, overall, teachers and heads of departments differed in their level of motivation because their working environments differed tremendously. Teachers from private secondary schools were well equipped with adequate teaching resources especially textbooks. Also, they had good salaries and allowances. It is therefore not surprising that they liked teaching the subjects. Hence they were motivated both intrinsically and extrinsically. Teachers from government

secondary schools had no adequate teaching resources, textbooks were scarce and they complained of low salaries, delayed promotions and had no teaching allowances. They had no motivation in teaching although they shared interest in teaching commercial subjects with others in private secondary schools.

The interest for some of them emanated from their wish to become lecturers in higher learning institutions. Intrinsic motivation for them was of their future personal gain not direct to students. Hence students also gained although they were not targeted. Yet motivation for some was due to rewards they received from the school managements. Nevertheless, Kreps (1990) contends that teacher's motivation is not only about the motivation to teach but also about the motivation to be a teacher as a lifelong career. Motivated teachers in the visited schools did not appear to reflect this quality. Students were vulnerable in the gains which would depend on the presence of motivating elements.

Teachers in government secondary schools were not motivated and those in private secondary schools were motivated. The two states of motivation on commercial subjects are likely to influence negatively examination performance in commercial subjects in ordinary level secondary schools in Ilala Municipality.

#### **4.2.6 Teacher mastery of Subject Matter**

Teacher's mastery of subject matter can be described in three ways according to Eggen and Kauchak (2001): knowledge of content, pedagogical content knowledge and general pedagogical knowledge. That is to say teachers must have good grasp of subject matter, know how to teach different concepts of the subject such that it

makes sense to students. Teachers were asked whether they were conversant with all topics in the syllabus, 3 out of 5 teachers said they were conversant with all topics in the syllabus of these subjects.

The other two (2) were not conversant. One out of the two (2) mentioned the topics which were difficult for her to teach- she narrated: *“I am not conversant with some topics of the syllabus for example Bank reconciliation and bills of exchange -I don’t even understand how I can teach the topics to my students. There no seminars on commercial subjects may be I would have asked and got helped”*.

This response indicates that teachers have problems with content and pedagogical skills. Hammond’s (2000) findings pointed certification status and degree in the field to be taught as very significantly and positively correlated with student outcomes. Obviously, according to Hammond (2000), a teacher who does not understand what she/he is supposed to teach his or her students probably his/her students cannot succeed and get good performance in examination.

On the other hand when students were asked on strategy and activities teachers used to teach commercial subjects, they said that most commonly they use question and answer, followed by group discussions. The commerce teacher in one school proved the students views on the teaching strategies by narrating: *“I use questions and answers and group discussions”*

These methods of teaching cover weakness of a teacher - even if she /he does not understand the topic because, after all questions and answers can be obtained in the

textbooks. He /she is supposed to prepare a lesson from it. In the normal class, a teacher starts with brainstorming with the previous lesson, followed with the lesson of the day, and thereafter the teacher evaluates his/her lesson by asking students questions related to the topic. However, the teacher above did not start with brainstorming the previous topic; she started with the questions of the topic of the day which students had no idea at all. Hence her students were not even able to answer the questions asked by their teacher. That is all about her teaching. Do students gain anything from this mode of teaching as the teacher did not give them notes where they can refer? This has a negative effect on students' performance. These strategies must follow teacher's presentation of the topic. Otherwise students would not understand the subject matter.

The findings are confirmed by class observation in teaching commercial subjects in two schools, where it was discovered the commercial teachers used strategies of question and answers followed with group discussion. Students participated less in their groups, no presentation from students were made and the teacher did not summarize his lesson. However, teachers from the third school opted lecture strategy on top of questions and answer strategy. In addition a researcher demanded the teaching documents from the commercial subjects' teachers and the findings were as follows: all teachers had schemes of works and subject log books. All teachers had no lesson plans. Can these kinds of teachers who cannot prepare and use lesson plans in their teaching process deliver the required subject matter to students? The process of delivering subject matter to students can be done in line with the number of periods allocated to the subjects as recommended in the syllabus.

Teachers were asked on the number of commercial subjects periods taught per week, it was discovered that they taught 4 periods per week. This was far below the ministry teaching norm of 7 periods per week in commercial classes of Form 3 and 4. The commerce teacher who was also the Book keeping teacher of one school said:

*“I teach 4 periods of commerce, and 4 period of Book keeping per week”*

In another school the commerce teacher said: *“Four periods per week in stream one and four periods in stream 2”*

Apparently teachers said that the number of periods per week were adequate except the commerce teacher in one school who stated: *“The number of periods is not adequate to cover the demanding syllabus”*

It is discouraging that some commercial subject teachers appear to be happy with teaching less number of commercial subjects' periods per week, far below the ministry norm. Under such circumstances, student learning will be very much affected. Mampangwa, (2005) findings noted inappropriate teaching periods of 5 periods a week were allocated for studying commercial subjects for forms 3 and 4 instead of the ministry's norm of 7 periods per week. In appropriate period allocation of commercial subjects has worsened from 5 periods per week in 2005 to 4 periods per week in 2014.

This is likely to invite rushed teaching, few and poorly set student tasks. The findings of this study showed that some teachers (2 out of 5) were not conversant with some



aspects of the subject matter knowledge they taught namely: “bank reconciliation statements” and “bills of exchange”.

It is surprising that these areas did not appear to match with what students felt were difficult for them to master (see section on student interest in learning commercial subjects). They cited “single entry, “Correction of errors”, “Non-profit making organization”, “marketing”, “international trade” and “demand and supply” as areas they did not master. Ordinarily, one would expect that what teachers did not master would largely reflect on what students did not master as well.

This observed mismatch between what teachers and students did not master appear to suggest that there are some topics which teachers (consciously or unconsciously) did not master for probably inadequate knowledge of content, and did not explain them in such a way that could made sense to students(pedagogical content knowledge and general pedagogical knowledge). Obviously this affects student understanding of commercial subjects and subsequent examination performance. This warrants further research in the teachers’ pedagogical content knowledge and general pedagogical knowledge.

It is concluded from the results of this study that some commercial subject teachers did not master some commercial subjects’ matter (topics) and is thus a factor that influenced poor examination performance in commercial subjects in ordinary level secondary schools in Ilala Municipality. Teacher mastery of subject matter requires to be translated into the classroom situation; through effective presentation and clear

communication with students. The next theme discusses results on availability of teaching and learning resources.

### **4.3 The Availability of Teaching and Learning Resources in Commercial Secondary Schools**

Teaching resources are generic materials used to describe resources teachers use to deliver instruction (Joceylene, 2012). They include theoretical and intangible elements, such as essays or support from other educators, or places to find teaching materials like libraries or resource centers. They are widely accepted to facilitate the teaching and learning process.

Textbooks are one of the most important inputs that have a demonstrable impact on student learning”, and that the two most consistent characteristics in improving student performance include the availability of textbooks and supplementary books. Apart from text books, library and computer laboratory are important to commercial subjects teachers and students. Within this context four areas were presented:

- i) Availability of teaching and learning resources in schools
- ii) Textbooks
- iii) Availability of school library, computer laboratories and internet service accessibility
- iv) Support from school heads

#### **4.3.1 Availability teaching and Learning Resources in Schools**

On the question of teaching resources for commercial subjects at schools, teachers were asked to mention the teaching resources that were available in school for

teaching commercial subjects. The participants (teachers) indicated that they had acute shortages of commercial subjects teaching/learning materials especially textbooks. However, they mentioned the available teaching materials including chalks, long ruler, chalkboards and wall charts were available in their schools.

One Book keeping teacher emphasized the severe shortage of particularly textbooks: *“We have only three (3) textbooks for commercial subjects. This is very difficult to teach in this cumbersome situation”*

Also a teacher from another visited secondary school narrated: *“Here at this school there is nothing! Nothing on commercial subjects! We have no books and other resources to enable us teach commercial subjects. The school does not buy commercial books because it is termed the subjects as option subjects not bias as it used to be. This directive from the Ministry of Education and Vocational Training is not fair to commercial students and teachers. What confuses me is a question: if a subject is not bias but optional, does it not have the right to be given books? Why should money allocated to school exclude commercial subject? This makes teachers of commercial subjects frustrated”*.

Similar findings were noted in Sengerema (2004) and in Mampangwa (2005) who found that there were inadequate teaching and learning materials for commercial subjects in secondary schools. The situation was different from a private secondary school. They had plenty of commercial textbooks, wall charts, blackboard, and sample documents from banks.

A teacher when asked if they have teaching resources she said: *“We have all the resources required in teaching commercial subjects- we are comfortable”*.

The teacher’s response was in agreement with students views as one student reported: *“At our school almost all students of commercial subjects are doing well. We follow the teacher when he is teaching us on a new topic. We understand the terminologies which he introduces to us from the topic. If the lesson is not understood he refers us to the school library. There are plenty of books for all subjects in the school. We sometimes search through the internet. We get plenty of materials. There is a laboratory full of computers. I think they are twenty or more.*

There is a clear challenge propelling several questions: why should a private school be equipped with everything on commercial subjects and not an old government secondary school and community based secondary school? Why should the government isolate commercial subjects in allocating resources? Why are the subjects optioned? It has been underscored elsewhere in this study that teaching and learning materials, especially textbooks and supplementary books are among the best predictors of student learning.

Knowledge acquisition and knowledge delivery for any subject of the taught curriculum cannot be effective without these materials. Commercial subjects should not be optional when it comes to the government allocation of resources purchase of textbooks and supplementary books. Like any other subject, it produces human resource needed in this country and outside the country.

We need commercial experts in the public and private institutions of this country. In addition, commercial subjects can serve as a springboard for entrepreneurship locally and internationally particularly in the globalized economy which is characterized by competition among other things. In these circumstances, one wonders why these subjects should be optional and neglected.

#### **4.3.2 Textbooks**

It is widely acceptable that textbooks and supplementary books are the best two predictors of teaching and learning materials that improve student learning. The World Bank, A Chance to Learn Report (2001) asserts that “now there is substantial research evidence which shows that textbooks are one of the most important inputs that have a demonstrable impact on student learning”. The report further states that the two most consistent characteristics in improving student performance include the availability of textbooks and supplementary books.

In visited government schools, all school had scarcity of textbooks on commercial subjects. But it was surprising to note that the textbooks scarcity in one of the two visited government schools was created by the head of the school. The researcher checked in school library and found there were no commercial textbooks.

The researcher asked the head of school if she can make an arrangement to buy few textbooks for the library to help students to access the content, she explained: *“Textbooks are available around 36 here in my store, you can have a look at them”*. The textbooks were safely kept in her office store. The researcher asked her

“why are you keeping them there? I think it is good to put them in the library for teachers and students accessibility”. She commented: *“Teachers haven’t come to ask for them, it is their responsibility”*

What kind of a headmistress is this one? May be there are many other heads of schools in our schools that use a management style like this one and hinder academic progress of the students. Osaki (2008) contends that textbooks use is the instructional device par excellence, and central to teaching, a classroom deprived of textbooks promote little in acquiring the intended skills.

The findings of this study have provided evidence that textbook provision to students varied dramatically between government and private schools; with government schools having relatively severe shortages. In two of the visited secondary schools, (both government schools), textbooks were inadequately supplied to students because some parents could not afford the purchase of the expensive commercial subjects text books for their children. Evidence suggests that the role of supply of textbooks is obligatory to parents. The directive issued by MOEVT on the use of capitation grant in its schools for purchasing of text books of selected subjects only; that is the sciences and arts, is clear testimony that supply of commercial subjects’ textbooks is obligatory to parents. Given the importance of textbooks in student achievement, it would seem that leaving textbook supply to parents, majority of whom are of low income levels, is to hinder student learning in commercial subjects, since many students would not afford to buy them. It is worth noting that the argument advanced here does not mean that parents should be exempted from

contributing in the costs for educating their children; rather parents should contribute where it is feasible.

Although MOEVT decision to provide capitation grant to its schools is commendable, it would seem reasonable that the grant covered purchase of textbooks for all subjects. In any case, the importance of textbooks knows no subject boundaries.

In addition most textbooks that were used in all three visited schools were not approved by the ministry and this is a very disturbing finding. The Ministry Educational Materials Approval Committee (EMAC) was established to ensure that the said materials are of qualitative standard and covers the subjects' syllabi before they can be used for the teaching and learning process. Allowing use of textbooks intended for other curricula than the national commercial subjects' curricula means wide variations in the subject matter taught and, in turn wide variations in the level of students' understanding of the subjects. The importance of textbooks in the student achievement is clearly undermined and it is only reasonable that EMAC urgently clears this deficiency.

Textbooks and supplementary materials have to be up-to-date to meet the contemporary needs of learners. Bregman and Bryner (2003) argue that updated student textbooks and supplementary books and sufficient supplies of teaching and learning resources supplemented the teaching and learning process. One government secondary school stocked its library with ancient and worn out textbooks as reference

books, which was not a good practice. These would fall in the hands of students who are desperate of knowledge and yet the knowledge would probably be inappropriate. There was also a disturbing habit in one school where commercial text books were kept in the school head's store instead of distributing them to students and teachers. Clearly this is gross mismanagement of teaching and learning resources whose implications amount to frustrating commercial subjects teachers (as reflected elsewhere in this chapter) in their teaching and hindering academic progress of the students.

It is clear from the above evidence that where the deficiency of textbooks and supplementary materials existed, teaching and learning process was impaired and it would not be surprising that teachers rushed in teaching as was revealed by students in this study. It is therefore, concluded that inadequate teaching and learning materials, particularly text books, use of unapproved textbooks, absence of a library and computer laboratory and the internet service contributed to poor performance in commercial subjects.

Given the advancements made in science and technology, and in particular, information technology, it is imperative to look at the role played by computer assisted technology as a source of learning.

#### **4.3.3 Availability of school library, Computer Laboratories and Internet**

##### **Service Accessibility Computers**

Computer assisted teaching has picked momentum over the years in supplementing teaching and learning in this era of rapid development of science and technology,



especially information technology. Along with the presence of a school library teachers were asked if they had a computer laboratory.

The findings found out that in two schools there were well-equipped computer laboratories but there was no computer laboratory in the third school. In one of the two schools with computer laboratories, there were 2 laboratories with 59 computers with internet facility and in the other school there was 1 laboratory with 30 computers and internet facility as well.

However commercial subjects' teachers in these schools were not aware of the existence of internet facilities, as attested by the following narration of a Book keeping teacher of one school: *"We have two computer laboratories but I am not sure if there is internet, let me ask the laboratory technician"*

Some teachers like the one above were complaining that their schools had acute shortage of teaching and learning materials but they did not even bother in searching for materials from the available computer laboratories in their schools where there was internet facility to supplement commercial study materials. The teacher did not even know whether there was internet facility in her school or not as she had to seek assurance from the technician. This implies that a teacher of this kind was not serious in her work.

The commerce subject teacher in the second school added: *"We have one computers laboratory but we have no internet facility" I never search materials from the computer lab"*

In my observation I found out that in both schools, in addition to having computer laboratories, there were also internet facilities and laboratory technicians. A technician of one of the two schools explained: *“Commercial subject teachers did not spare time to come and use the facilities”*.

Think the nature of this kind of teachers who cannot spare their time searching the materials for their commercial subjects, even if the opportunities are they are not even bothering to encourage their students to use the available computer labs; can students perform well in their examination?

The findings of this study suggest that schools did not take full advantage of the existing computer laboratories and internet facility. Where the facilities were available, they were not used by students and teachers to look for update knowledge although the internet is another very powerful, modern source providing ample and up to date knowledge. This facility is an alternative for textbooks and school library, although it does not replace them. It has the same impact that textbooks have, it is among the best predictors of student performance. Computers for instance, would be used to run CD ROMs with ready-made commercial subjects lessons as alternative strategy of teaching students and stimulating both students’ and teachers’ interest in the subject.

The school that had no computer laboratory had also a serious shortage of textbooks. Students and teachers of this school missed the opportunity of searching for update knowledge. Clearly, having no access to computers and internet facility, students had

a more serious effect in their learning and academic performance. Making use of the computers for teaching and learning would alleviate the serious shortage of text books in the visited schools and improve performance in commercial subjects.

#### **4.3.4 School Library**

A library constitutes an important resource (facility) to promote learning. It promotes students ability to look for materials and inculcate a reading culture among them. When probed about whether there was a school library to supplement shortage of textbooks in schools, all teachers responded that their schools had library facility but in one school there were no commercial textbooks in the school library. The commerce subject teacher in one school while agreeing that there was a school library lamented: *“The school library had few old and worn out reference books of commercial subjects, many books are for science subjects”*.

On the other hand, commerce teacher from another visited school narrated: *“The school library had no books of commercial subjects but there are many science and arts books”*.

#### **4.3.5 Support from School Heads**

When answering the question on whether school managements assisted heads of departments in solving department requirements especially those that affect student performance, only the department head of one secondary school (a non-government school) agreed to have the support from the management. She had this to say: *“I get support from the management”*.

However the head of commercial department in another secondary school answered.  
*“I submit requirements to my school head but no action is taken. This leaves the department with acute shortage of textbooks and reference books.”*

If the head of school cannot support her head of department, it is reasonable to doubt her management skills. Weakness in the school heads' management skills, influences negatively, management of commercial subjects at department and classroom levels; which can result in poor examination performance. It would not be surprising, therefore, to find heads of schools with this management style because most probably, some were appointed to head schools but were not trained in school management so they had to apply their own techniques in running their schools. This is likely to affect student performance. Apart from teaching and learning resources, we are now going to discuss student interest in studying commercial subjects.

#### **4.4 Student Interest in Studying Commercial Subjects**

Interest is defined as a state of curiosity or concern about or attention to something Farlex (2014). This definition, when put in a class situation is described as involving some kind of preference for a school subject or for activities related to that subject. Therefore, interest is inner feeling in performing a certain activity. Students' interest in learning is driven by teacher interest in teaching a lesson.

Cziksentmihalyi *et al.* (1993) found that students who are engaged in work that interested them were tremendously more able to see connections between their

present work in school and their future academic or career goals. This theme will be discussed under three sub themes.

- i) Students interests in studying commercial subjects
- ii) Students mastery of subject matter
- iii) Students mastery of medium of instruction (English)

#### **4.4.1 (i) Students interests in studying subjects**

During interview and focus group discussion students were asked if they were interested in studying commercial subjects. The findings of the study indicated that all 24 (100%) students were interested in studying commercial subjects. They explained that the reasons of having interest were because they wanted to become businessmen, economists, and accountants. In addition, they like commercial subjects because these subjects are practical and applicable in their daily life, for example, in making personal and family budgets.

These findings were supported by those of the focus group interview. One member of focus group interview in one secondary school made further elaboration by narrating: *‘I am interested in studying commercial subjects because I wanted to become a big businessman and in turn improve the country’s economy’*

These students are interested in studying commercial subjects but they are discouraged in the way the content was delivered to them in class and the shortage of teaching and learning materials. Other members of focused group in another school expressed interest in studying commercial subjects. One of them narrated: *“Madam*

*we are interested in studying commercial subjects because the subjects are applicable in the real life. It is true the subjects are beneficial in our daily life –we can apply the knowledge gained in those subjects and apply it even at our homes. We can budget our money properly”.*

However students’ interest is heavily influenced by some teacher’s attitude to teach a subject. According to Eggen and Kauchak (2001), positive teachers’ attitudes are fundamental to effective teaching. A teacher must be interesting to his learners; he/she must work/manipulate his students into such a state of interest in what he/she is going to teach them. Hence, other objects of attention get banished from their mind. Interestingly all students were interested in studying commercial subjects. However, contrary to Eggen and Kauchack’s (2001) contention, their interests were derived from their personal future goals. It is clear from the findings that students were interested in studying commercial subjects but their interests fell short of the role played by positive teachers’ attitudes which are fundamental to effective teaching and learning.

#### **4.4.2 Students mastery of Subject Matter**

The researcher asked students if they understood all commercial subjects’ topics taught to them. The following were their narratives:

A participant from one secondary school narrated: *“Madame commercial subjects are good and interesting but we did not understand all topics taught and we faced more difficulties in “Non-profit making organizations”. Also in “correction of errors” and “single entry”*

The same question was asked to students in another secondary school and one student repented: *“we are like cartoons in the class we did not understand ‘single entry’, ‘non-profit making organizations’, ‘international trade’, ‘demand and supply’ and ‘marketing’ we tried to ask the teacher but still we are in darkness. We doubt we do not know what we shall do if the topics come in the final examination”*

Generally, the findings indicated that students find difficulties in some commercial subjects’ topics and they are not sure what to do if those topics were tested in the final examination. This condition is likely to affect student performance in commercial subjects in Ilala Municipality.

#### **4.4.3 Student Mastery of Medium of Instruction (English)**

English as the medium of instruction in commercial subjects acted as a barrier to students’ understanding of the subject matter. In this case we refer to commercial subjects. Students experience difficulties in understanding the terminologies in the subjects.

A student of one secondary school lamented: *“I wish I knew English, I wouldn’t be unhappy in my favorite subjects which are commercial subjects. We have no books for the subjects but I would have gone to libraries, even British council. I hear they have good books. But I cannot go because I will not understand what I read. I have no good background of English since primary school as I used to study in Kiswahili. Now at secondary school level no improvement as some teachers are teaching us in Kiswahili”.*

Students of commercial subjects have to struggle a lot to understand the commercial concepts taught because of poor mastery of medium of instruction. The deficiency is common and is also revealed in Sengerema's study (2004) who found that poor mastery of instructional language by students inhibited their understanding of concepts and was severed by some teachers who could not clarify concepts because they had limited vocabulary, limited fluency and poor grammar. Different responses were given by students from another visited secondary school which is a non government secondary school.

One of the students from the school had this to tell: *“At our school almost all students of commercial subjects are doing well. We follow the teacher when he is teaching us on a new topic. We understand the terminologies which she introduces to us from the topic. If the lesson is not understood he refers us to the school library. There are plenty of books for all subjects in the school. We sometimes search through the internet. We get plenty of materials. There is a lab full of computers. I think they are twenty and more. We have no problem of English language because almost all students at this school had schooled in English medium primary schools. We are happy”.*

Things were not smooth in the government community based secondary school visited. Students are not directed to their goal of success through commercial subjects instead their teachers are discouraging them by teaching them in Kiswahili. One of the students of this secondary school stated: *“We are taught some new terminologies, things are difficult to grasp and understand in English, the teacher*



*used to explain them to us in Kiswahili after all we remain unsure of what was taught. Worse still the bookkeeping teacher use more Kiswahili in teaching the subject instead of English. In addition she dictates bookkeeping subject notes and questions but she does not check students exercise books to see what we have written is correct or not. Given the fact that, we do not know English well and she rarely writes on blackboard”.*

We can note a sharp contrast in teaching and learning between the visited private and government secondary schools. Teachers are taking care of their students and students are happy with their studies in private schools but in the government secondary schools, students are taught anyhow. Can success be expected in that teaching environment?

Students’ remarks in government secondary schools suggest that their interest in excelling in life through learning commercial subjects is clashed by a negative learning environment in which they are schooling. This situation is likely to affect student performance in commercial subjects in Ilala Municipality. The fourth and last theme discusses findings on Inspection of School Commercial subjects.

#### **4.5 School Inspection**

School inspection is defined as the process of ensuring that schools comply with the Tanzanian Education Act No. 25 of 1978 and ascertaining whether schools are being properly and efficiently managed (URT (e), 1978). Every school must be inspected once in the period of two years for whole school inspection. This means every

subject including commercial subjects must be inspected within that period, but this is not happening as planned by the policy makers (MOEVT). The inspectorate is facing a lot of challenges including financial constraints and reliable means of transport which hinder implementation of inspection in schools.

Teachers were asked whether commercial subjects had been inspected in their schools between the year 2011 and 2013. The findings indicated that generally there was no inspection conducted on commercial subjects for quite a long time.

The researcher perused the inspection file in one secondary school and discovered that inspectors conducted whole school inspection in 2010 to see how the school complied with set education standards. There were no school inspection reports on commercial subjects seen in this file. One head of school in the visited schools had this to tell: ‘*School inspectors came to carry out special inspection for establishing advanced level subject’s combination in 2009*’.

In the third of the visited school, there was whole school inspection in 2013 where all subjects were inspected but commercial subjects were left out. On the basis of these findings, it appears that the school inspectorate department is silent on the quality of teaching of commercial subjects. Failure to inspect the subjects deprives the ministry of the opportunity to know the teaching status and possible interventions to improve the performance of commercial subjects.

The above findings were supported by school heads who were interviewed on whether or not school inspectors inspect commercial subjects in their schools. The

findings revealed that no inspection had been conducted for commercial subjects in each of the 3 visited schools. The school head for one secondary school said: *“Inspector inspected the school in 2010 but there was no school inspector to inspect commercial subjects”*

Interview with school heads on the question: Does school inspection affect examination performance in your school? It revealed mixed views.

The school head of one school said: *“School inspections affect examination performance because they provide onsite teacher support, which improves teacher’s teaching methods and practices”*.

In the one visited schools, which is a private school the head used his own efforts to do internal supervision for improving examination performance. He had this to tell: *“School inspectors do inspect primary school but they don’t inspect secondary school. I never saw them here to conduct whole school inspection and commercial subjects are not inspected as well, so we use our internal inspection team of teachers under the school head supervision to inspect the secondary school teaching process. The team inspects actual teaching in classes and teaching documents. The teachers who are found to be weak are advised accordingly and followed up. This improves the performance of our school”*.

Failure of school inspection in schools affects the day-to-day implementation of curriculum in schools including commercial subjects. Therefore this can hinder students’ academic performance. Given that no teacher had been inspected on

commercial subjects, commerce teachers in one school had this to say: *“Inspectors should come to inspect us so that we benefit from their expertise. Without inspection we cannot improve our way of teaching (methodology) and new knowledge in our subjects”*

A trend similar to the findings were revealed in Controller and Auditor General’s performance report (CAG) (URT,(g),2008) on school inspection which noted, among other things, that the inspectorate did not effectively communicate and follow up on implementation of its recommendations and failed to monitor the effectiveness of school inspections. The findings in CAG are supported by Sengerema’s study (2004) which found that ineffective school inspection contributed to poor student performance.

It is generally argued that school inspection lead to school improvement including student learning outcome (Whitby, 2010; OFSTED, 2007). According to Faro (1996), school inspectors play a pivotal role in teacher development. Fullan (1991) adds that teachers need regular support from colleagues and managers to ensure progressive and effective performance. Also Nyaki (2006) maintains that, the effectiveness of the school inspection is largely determined by the higher frequency, the nature of advice and recommendations given to those who are inspected. Ehren (2011) reveals that teachers’ perception on those inspected schools had implemented more changes in terms of quality improvement. On the other hand, Wolf *et al.* (2009) found that student scores increased where schools were inspected and concluded that school inspection lead to slightly better school performance.

The findings of this study discovered that there was no school inspection conducted for commercial subjects because inspection teams did not comprise commercial subjects' inspectors. Schools had to rely on their internal supervision mechanism. This system of inspection is similar to Peer inspection/ School Site Supervision where colleagues of the same school and same grade could open classroom doors for contact among themselves. This system enables teachers to report to their colleagues as their first source of professional help/support when school inspectors help is not available (UNESCO, 2001).

Despite the fact that teachers in one of the visited schools conducted their internal supervision, it is interesting to note that, they perceived inspectors expertise as beneficial in improving their teaching and school performance. The findings support local studies on monitoring the quality of education where teachers perceived school inspectors as mainly bringing new ideas and suggesting on improving teaching methods (Mrutu *et al.*, 2005). On the basis of the findings it appears that teachers valued the potential that inspectors work had in enhancing their performance and in turn student performance. The genesis of their perception in probably from their encounters with inspectors while teaching in other schools or seeing the benefits other teachers got when their subjects were inspected. Schools that are inspected by school Inspectors have added advantage because school inspectors bring to schools their expertise and experiences of other inspected schools in supporting teachers professionally.

It should be recalled that these subjects were among the subjects abolished for a short

period from the secondary school curriculum in 2004 through ministry directives. Leaving the subjects uninspected is very worrying and requires immediate attention by the inspectorate department. In addition it violated the ministry norm which directs that school inspection (including inspecting all subjects taught in the offered curriculum) should be conducted once for each school in two year's period (URT (f), 2010).

Overall the findings indicated that school inspection was in effective in its inspectoral role and hence it is expected to be among the factors that are likely to influence poor examination performance in commercial subjects in ordinary level secondary schools in Ilala Municipality. In the next chapter, summary, conclusions and recommendations of this study are made.

## **CHAPTER FIVE**

### **5.0 SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

#### **5.1 Introduction**

This chapter presents a summary of the study. It also makes some conclusions in relation to the findings. Finally, recommendations are made both for action and for further studies on factors that influence poor examination performance in commercial subjects in ordinary level secondary schools in Ilala municipality, Dar es Salaam, Tanzania.

#### **5.2 Summary of the Study**

In chapter one, the background of the problem, statement of the study, objective of the study, research tasks and questions were highlighted. The chapter also discussed the significance of the study and organization of the study. In this study, the researcher adapted the system theory input output model advanced by Ludwig Bertalanfly in the mid 1950s.

The objectives of the study were:

- i) To examine teachers' qualities in teaching subjects;
- ii) To assess the availability of teaching and learning resources in relation to commercial subjects;
- iii) To examine students' interest in learning subjects and how this affects their performance in Ordinary Level examinations;
- iv) To find out the extent to which schools are inspected and how recommendations given by school inspectors are adhered to.

The problem surrounding the study was that the national examination performance in commercial subjects tended to decreased between 2004 and 2011 (national picture). Individual schools in the Municipality had a similar trend in performance. In addition, there was no research done on the factors influencing poor examination performance in commercial subjects in ordinary level Secondary schools in Ilala Municipality, since the secondary school curriculum was reformed in 2006 up to 2011.

The literature review in chapter two dealt with teacher's qualities in teaching commercial subjects, availability of teaching and learning resources in relation to commercial subjects and the extent to which commercial subjects are inspected, and how these affect performance in examinations. The literature review has shown strong and consistent teacher quality predictors of student achievement such as academic and professional qualifications, teacher motivation, and teacher mastery of the subject matter, teacher experience and professional effective communication. The literature review has also shown that availability of teaching and learning resources especially textbooks are one of the most important inputs that have a demonstrable impact on student learning, and that school inspections seemed to have an effect on student performance and in turn led to better school performance especially in less developed education systems.

This study aimed to investigate, among other things, teachers' qualities in teaching commercial subjects and to investigate the availability of teaching and learning resources in relation to commercial subjects and how this affects their performance



in Ordinary Level examinations. The model helped to explore the interrelatedness of Form 4 students studying commercial subjects (input) Commercial subjects' teachers qualities, availability of teaching and learning resources, students interest in learning and school inspection (the process) and students' academic performance in national form four examinations (the output).

Chapter three discusses research methodology which was qualitative approach. The main area of the study included 3 secondary schools in Ilala Municipality, Dar es salaam, Tanzania. The literature showed that qualitative research approach was suitable for the present study which is concerned with the experiences of participants on the teaching and learning of commercial subjects in ordinary level secondary schools in Ilala.

For this qualitative study, literature survey and empirical inquiry was used. The study was conducted in 3 secondary schools (one old government secondary school, the other one being community based secondary school and a private secondary school). Sampling was mainly purposeful. The selected sample comprised 5 commercial subject teachers, 3 heads of commercial subjects' departments, 3 heads of schools and 24 Form 4 commercial subjects' students. Data was collected through semi structured -one to one interviews, focus group discussions and documentary review. Data was qualitative and was subjected to thematic analysis in chapter 4. Data was then transcribed, analyzed and discussed.

### **5.2.1 Major Findings**

This study has found evidence that there are teacher quality factors, teaching and

learning resources, students interest factors and school inspection factors that contribute to poor examination performance in commercial subjects in ordinary level secondary school in Ilala Municipality. A detailed account of the findings is provided in Chapter 4 of this study. The conclusions are therefore derived from the findings.

#### **5.2.1.1 Teacher Quality Factors**

The study sought information on teacher academic and professional qualifications. The findings revealed that one teacher was a failure in her diploma in education training. It is therefore concluded in this study that inadequate academic qualification of some commercial subject's teachers is a likely factor that contributed to poor examination performance in commercial subjects in Ilala Municipality.

#### **5.2.1.2 Motivation**

The study looked for information on whether teachers were motivated to teach commercial subjects. The findings showed that, teachers in government secondary schools were not motivated but those in private secondary schools were motivated. It is concluded that, less motivation among commercial subject teachers is a likely factor that contributes to poor examination performance in commercial subjects in ordinary level secondary schools in Ilala Municipality.

#### **5.2.1.3 Professional Ability of Teachers to Effectively Communicate**

One of the questions the study asked teachers was: are you conversant with the language of instruction (English) in teaching commercial subjects? The findings revealed a serious professional inability for effective communication between some

commercial subject teachers and most of their students. Although not unexpected, the inability is compounded by the poor English background of the commercial subjects' teachers and their students.

It is concluded in this study that, professional inability of teachers to effectively communicate is a factor that is likely to contribute to poor examination performance in commercial subjects in ordinary level secondary schools in Ilala Municipality

#### **5.2.1.4 In-service Training**

Teachers were probed if they had received any in-service training. The findings showed that majority of commercial subject teachers interviewed had not received in-service training. They also used their old methods (content base) in teaching commercial subjects. Subject teachers have rust mind they are not aware of occurring changes in the subjects and worse still, they were using the 1997 syllabus which is 14 years old! In order to have a good output, that is good academic performance, teachers should be up to date in teaching skills and use up to date syllabus. All 3 heads of commercial subjects departments had not received in-service training. The in-service training can help them to be able to guide others in new skills in teaching the subjects and to oversee the teaching and learning process respectively. It is therefore concluded in this study that absence of commercial teachers' regular in-service training makes rust minds worse and, hence likely to students' poor examination performance in Ilala Municipality.

#### **5.2.1.5 Teacher's Mastery of Subject Matter**

This study sought information on whether teachers were conversant with all topics

taught in the syllabus. The findings of this study revealed that some teachers (2 out of 5) were not conversant with some topics (subject matter knowledge) they taught namely: “bank reconciliation statements” and “bills of exchange”.

Some teachers did not master some topics probably for inadequate knowledge of content or did not explain them in such a way that could made sense to students. Obviously this affects student understanding of commercial subjects and subsequent examination performance. It is concluded from the results of this study that failure by some commercial subject teachers to master some commercial subjects topics is likely to contribute to poor examination performance in commercial subjects in ordinary level secondary schools in Ilala Municipality.

### **5.2.2 Student Interest In Learning Commercial Subject’s Factors**

The main question asked was whether students were interested in studying commercial subjects. The findings of the study revealed that all 24 (100%) students were interested in studying commercial subjects. However Students claimed that teachers did not direct them to their goals of success of studying commercial subjects. Teachers discouraged students by teaching them in Kiswahili instead of English.

Also, students interest were highly affected by lack of teaching and learning materials for the subjects especially in government and community based secondary schools. The given reasons retarded their interest in studying commercial subjects, hence their performance in commercial subjects.

It is therefore, concluded in this study that teachers' poor mastery of subject matter and teachers' poor mastery of English as the medium of instruction, reduced student interests in studying commercial subjects, hence influenced poor examination performance in commercial subjects in ordinary level secondary schools in Ilala Municipality.

### **5.2.3 Teaching and Learning Resources Factors**

One of the questions asked was: What was the available teaching and learning resources in the school? Evidence showed inadequate teaching and learning materials, especially shortage of text books. Textbooks, libraries and computers were among the salient materials mentioned. This study concludes that inadequate teaching and learning materials, particularly text books, underutilized internet facility in supplementing teaching and learning is likely to influence poor examination performance in commercial subjects in ordinary level secondary school in Ilala Municipality.

### **5.2.4 School inspection**

One of the questions asked was whether commercial subjects were inspected or not. The findings revealed that commercial subjects were not inspected for quite a long time in the visited secondary schools but whenever school inspections were conducted commercial subject school inspectors were not included in the inspection teams. This situation affects much student's performance.

It is therefore, concluded in this study that absence of inspection of commercial

subjects was a factor that is likely to influence poor examination performance in commercial subjects in ordinary level secondary schools in Ilala Municipality.

### **5.3 Conclusion**

Factors influencing poor examination performance in commercial subjects in Ilala Municipality are compounded. Hence no single factor can stand alone to explain factors influencing poor examination performance in commercial subjects in ordinary level secondary schools in Ilala Municipality. The factors revealed seem to influence academic performance in those secondary schools. Starting with human and material resources, the study revealed some of problems emanated in those resources: some schools had no books, libraries and other teaching and learning material related to commercial subjects for both teachers and students. In order students to perform well and teachers to teach effectively teaching and learning materials are important. Hence these affected teachers' motivation in the teaching of commercial subject. Also students lacked reference materials for commercial subjects.

On the other hand, some of the teachers were not competent in teaching commercial subjects. For example in one of the secondary schools one teacher was a diploma failure, yet she was teaching Form Four students. What do we expect from that kind of a teacher in relation to students performance in examination! It is obvious students will be failures like their teacher.

School inspection is another important factor in enhancing academic performance of students in schools. Inspectors have the role of making sure the school is giving the

right education to students according to existing syllabus. Also they have to make sure that text books and other teaching and learning materials are relevant to the given syllabus. In this study, schools were not inspected for a long time. Surprisingly, when inspection occurred commercial subjects had no subject inspector. This is the bottle neck enhancing commercial subjects in schools. The schools I visited were using 1997 syllabus! Hence there are no doubts these schools to have poor examination performance. We can conclude that lack of teaching and learning resources, incompetent teachers and lack of inspection of schools all contributed to poor examination performance in ordinary level secondary schools in Ilala Municipality.

#### **5.4 Recommendations**

The following recommendations are made on the basis of the discussion of the findings and conclusions:

- i) The Ministry of Education and Vocational Training (MOEVT) ought to conduct an audit of commercial subjects' teachers to identify unqualified teachers and remove them from the teaching employment.
- ii) MOEVT in collaboration with Tanzania Institute of Education (TIE) should urgently, review the business studies syllabus which was designed in 1997 and replace it with a competent based syllabus. Special attention should be directed to Form three bookkeeping syllabus which is too long to cover within a year. It should be noted that teaching in Forms 3 and 4 is done in rush because the syllabus is too long while number of periods allocated to teach these subjects is less than that recommended in the syllabus. Hence the urgency for a follow up.

- iii) MOEVT in collaboration with PMO-RALG (Prime Minister's Office, Regional Administration and Local Government) should conduct regular teacher audit for purposes of identifying teachers whose promotions are overdue and take corrective measures.
- iv) MOEVT should review the directive on use of capitation grant to purchase all basic textbooks for all subjects rather than limiting it to purchase science and arts books only.
- v) PMO-RALG in collaboration with School Inspectorate and TIE should carry out an audit of schools (government and non government) with computer facilities and organize local level (wards) workshops to commercial subject teachers, heads of departments and heads of schools on the use of computers and internet for teaching and learning.
- vi) MOEVT in collaboration with School Inspectorate department should train commercial subjects' inspectors in order to alleviate the existing shortage, preferably beginning the next intake (2015) of training new school inspectors.

#### **5.4.1 Areas of Further Research**

This study focused on factors that influence students' poor examination performance in commercial subjects in ordinary Level Secondary schools in Ilala Municipality. The study assumed a qualitative approach where only 3 secondary schools were sampled. The findings of this study reflects the visited schools and cannot be generalized or claim to be conclusive. Given the sensitive nature of commercial subjects and bearing the revealed factors influencing poor examination performance in commercial subjects, it would be reasonable to conduct another study using survey



design involving a large sample in order to establish the magnitude of the problem and be able to generalize the findings.

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## **APPENDICES**

### **APPENDIX I: Detailed Fieldwork Questions (Interview) for Commercial Subjects' Teachers**

This study is conducted in order to find out factors influencing poor examination performance in commercial subjects in ordinary level secondary schools and how to improve the situation. Your contributions to this study are therefore very important. You are kindly requested to be cooperative and free to give your views. Before we start our interview, I would like to assure you that the information you give will be strictly confidential and your name will not appear in the transcript.

#### **A: Teachers' Qualities in Teaching Commercial Subjects:**

1. What academic and professional qualifications do you have?
  - (i) Masters in Education
  - (ii) Degree in Education
  - (iii) Diploma in Education
  - (iv) No training
2. How long have you been teaching commercial subjects?
3. How often did you receive in-service training in commercial subjects during the last three years (2010-2012)?
4. Are you conversant with the use of medium of instruction (English) in teaching commercial subjects?
5. Do your students master the medium of instruction (English) in learning commercial subjects? If not why?

6. Are you interested in teaching commercial subjects? Why?
7. Are you happy and motivated to teach commercial subjects? Why?
8. How many periods per week do you teach commercial subjects?
9. Is this load per week adequate for coverage of the syllabus?
10. What topics are difficult in teaching commercial subjects? Mention them.

**B. Availability of teaching and learning resources in relation to commercial subjects**

1. What are the available resources in teaching and learning commercial subjects in your school?
2. Are they adequate and up-to-date to facilitate teaching for enhanced student performance?
3. What can be done to improve the situation in your school?

**C: School Inspection:**

1. Are commercial subjects inspected in your school?
  - (i) YES
  - (ii) NO

If YES when (year) was the last inspection in this school? If NO, Why?
2. Were school inspectors report effected by the school management?
3. Did you use inspector's reports to improve the teaching and learning of commercial subjects in your school?
4. Was there a follow- up inspection by commercial school inspector?

**Thank you very much for sparing your time to participate in this discussion**

## **APPENDIX II: Detailed Fieldwork Questions (Interview) for Commercial Subjects' Teachers**

This study is conducted in order to find out factors influencing poor examination performance in commercial subjects in ordinary level secondary schools and how to improve the situation. Your contributions to this study are therefore very important. You are kindly requested to be cooperative and free to give your views. Before we start our interview, I would like to assure you that the information you give will be strictly confidential and your name will not appear in the transcript.

### **A: Teachers' qualities in teaching commercial subjects.**

1. How long have you been teaching commercial subjects since you started your teaching career?
2. How long have you been heading commercial subjects' department?
3. What is your academic qualification on commercial subject?
  - (i) Masters in Education
  - (ii) Degree in Education
  - (iii) Diploma in Education
  - (iv) No training
5. How often have you received in-service training in commercial subjects during the last three years (2010-2012?)
6. Are you heading commercial subjects department with interest WHY?
7. Are you happy and motivated to head commercial subjects' department? WHY?

8. Does the school management assist you in solving your departmental requirements especially those that affect students' performance?

**B. Availability of teaching and learning resources in relation to commercial subjects.**

1. What are the available resources in teaching and learning commercial subjects in your department?
2. Are they adequate and up-to-date to facilitate teaching for enhanced student performance?

**C: School Inspection**

1. Are Commercial Subjects inspected? What was the last inspection in your school?
2. Were school inspectors' report recommendations effected by school management?
3. was there a follow- up by school inspectors?

**Thank you very much for sparing your time to participate in this discussion**

### **Appendix III: Detailed Fieldwork Questions (Interview) for Heads of School**

This study is conducted in order to find out factors influencing poor examination performance in commercial subjects in ordinary level secondary schools and how to improve the situation. Your contributions to this study are therefore very important. You are kindly requested to be cooperative and free to give your views. Before we start our interview, I would like to assure you that the information you give will be strictly confidential and your name will not appear in the transcript. Being head of school you are in a position to best explain the administrative aspects of your school.

1. How long have you been teaching since you started your teaching career?
2. How long have you been heading schools?
3. What is your academic qualification?
  - (i) Masters in Education
  - (ii) Degree in Education
  - (iii) Diploma in Education
4. How often have you received in-service training in school management during the last three years (2010-2012)?

#### **B. Availability of teaching and learning resources in relation to commercial subjects.**

1. What are the available resources in teaching and learning commercial subjects in your school?
2. Are they adequate to facilitate teaching?

#### **C. School inspection**

1. Do school inspectors inspect commercial subjects in your school?



2. Does school inspection affect examination performance in your school?

**Thank you very much for sparing your time to participate in this discussion**

## **APPENDIX IV: Detailed Fieldwork Questions One to One Interview and Focus**

### **Group Discussion for Four Students**

This study is conducted in order to find out factors influencing poor examination performance in commercial subjects in ordinary level secondary schools and how to improve the situation. Your contributions to this study are therefore very important. You are kindly requested to be cooperative and free to give your views. Before we start our interview, I would like to assure you that the information you give will be strictly confidential and your name will not appear in the transcript.

**A: Students' interest in learning commercial subjects and how this affects their performance:**

1. Are you interested in learning commercial subjects?
2. Do you understand all the topics taught in commercial subjects?
3. Do your commercial teachers conversant with the medium of instructions (English) in teaching commercial subjects?
4. Do you have a school library and a computer laboratory? Are there enough text books and supplementary books for studying commercial subjects? Probe, how do you find out commercial subjects materials which are not available at your school?

**Thank you very much for sparing your time to participate in this discussion**

**APPENDIX V: 40 Minutes Classroom Lesson Observation Schedule to  
Commercial Subject Teachers**

Name of school .....

Form.....

Subject.....

A. Teacher's professional ability to interact effectively with students:

- Fluency in explaining commercial subject concepts using English language

B. Students' ability to interact with the teacher:

- Ability to ask and answer questions fluently in English language;

C. Students' interest in learning commercial subjects:

- Attentiveness
- Extent of participation during the lesson

D. Teacher's motivation in teaching:

- Teaching methods
- Use of teaching aids

## APPENDIX VI: Research Clearance Letter

THE OPEN UNIVERSITY OF TANZANIA  
DIRECTORATE OF RESEARCH, PUBLICATIONS, AND POSTGRADUATE STUDIES

P.O. Box 23409  
Dar es Salaam, Tanzania.  
<http://www.out.ac.tz>



Tel: 255-22-2666752/2668445 ext.2101  
Fax: 255-22-2668759,  
E-mail: [drps@out.ac.tz](mailto:drps@out.ac.tz)

REF: HD/E/128/T.10

Date: 30/10/2013

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

**RE: RESEARCH CLEARANCE: JULIANA MASASI MHONYIWA**

The Open University of Tanzania was established by an act of Parliament no. 17 of 1992. The act became operational on the 1<sup>st</sup> March 1993 by public notes No. 55 in the official Gazette. Act number 7 of 1992 has now been replaced by the Open University of Tanzania charter which is in line the university act of 2005. The charter became operational on 1<sup>st</sup> January 2007. One of the mission objectives of the university is to generate and apply knowledge through research. For this reason the staffs and students undertake research activities from time to time.

To facilitate the research function, the vice chancellor of the Open University of Tanzania was empowered to issue research clearance to both staffs and students of the university on behalf of the government of Tanzania and the Tanzania Commission of Science and Technology.

The purpose of this letter is to introduce to you **Juliana Masasi Mhonyiwa**, a masters student at the Open University of Tanzania with Reg. No. HD/E/128/T.10. By this letter the student has been granted clearance to conduct research in the country. The title of his research is "Factors Influencing Poor Examination Performance in Commercial Subjects in Tanzania Ordinary Level Secondary Schools: A Case of Ilala Municipal." The research will be conducted in Ilala Municipality from 05/11/2013 to 28/02/2014.

In case you need any further information, please contact the Deputy Vice Chancellor (Academics), The Open University of Tanzania, P.O. Box 23409, Dar es Salaam, Tel: 022-2668820.

We thank you in advance for your cooperation and facilitation of this research activity.

Yours sincerely,

Prof S. Mbogo

For: VICE CHANCELLOR

THE OPEN UNIVERSITY OF TANZANIA

## APPENDIX VII: Introduction Letter

### HALMASHAURI YA MANISPAA YA ILALA

BARUA ZOTE ZIPELEKWE KWA MKURUGENZI WA MANISPAA

S. L. P. 20950  
SIMU NA: 2128800  
2128805  
FAX NO. 2121486



Ofisi ya Mkurugenzi  
Wa Manispaa Ilala

4/11/2013

Kumb. No. IMC/LR.6/1.VOL.III/35

Wakuu wa Shule,  
Shule ya Sekondari **Jangwani**,  
**Mnazi Mmoja** na  
**Tusiime**  
**DAR ES SALAAM.**

**YAH: KUMTAMBULISHA MWL. JULIANA MASASI MHONYIWA MKAGUZI  
MKUU WA SHULE MANISPAA YA ILALA**

Tafadhali husika na somo tajwa hapo juu.

Namtambulisha kwenu **Mwl. Juliana Masasi Mhonyiwa** ambaye ni Mkaguzi Mkuu wa Shule katika Halmashauri ya Manispaa ya Ilala. Mwalimu huyu anafanya utafiti katika Shule za Sekondari **Jangwani**, **Mnazi Mmoja** na **Tusiime**.

Tafadhali mpeni ushirikiano.

Nawatakieni kazi njema.

V. P. Mlowosa

**KNY: MKURUGENZI WA MANISPAA  
HALMASHAURI YA MANISPAA YA ILALA**

**Nakala:** Mkurugenzi wa Manispaa – (aione kwenye jalada)  
Halmashauri ya Manispaa ya Ilala